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The Church and its social mission

THE CHURCH

AND

ITS SOCIAL MISSION

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(The Baird Lecture for 1901)

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS volume contains six lectures which, in accordance with the requirements of the Baird Trust, were delivered in Glasgow, in the early months of last year. The lectures, however, are not reproduced in lecture form. They have been divided into chapters; and, in carrying out this division, some rearrangements and modifications of the original plan have been made necessary. In chapters xiii. and xv., the author has inserted parts of the course that he had designed, which, for want of time, he was obliged to omit from the lectures.

The chief interest of the present day is a social interest. Over questions relating to the furtherance of wellbeing, and to the improvement of the conditions of life, the most active and influential thought is exercised. Thus, with regard to the arts and the sciences, it is felt that, whilst know-

ledge is to be pursued for its own sake, and the ascertainment of truth is the end of research, the ultimate aim of all real knowledge and of all truth is the making of life worthier and wealthier. The work of the student is coming ever more fully into line with the efforts of those who, as philanthropists, as educationists, as officers of health, as members of corporations, as politicians, are bent on reducing the occasions of evil to individuals and of loss to the community, and on a more effective application of the laws and the constituents of social righteousness. With this convergence of purpose in view, no issue can be more important than that which bears on the moral and spiritual influence that pervades all endeavour. Sometimes this influence is ignored. Sometimes, though not altogether ignored, the entire emphasis is put on sanitary, on scientific, or on economic principles and methods. In this volume, the contention virtually is that, in the building up of a noble human society, as in the building up of a noble human being, the indispensable factor is the moral will, the moral conscience, — that it is this that determines the quality both of the personal unit and of the civic unity.

The book now published assumes that the ministry of the Christian Church specially con-

nects with ethical impulses and standards. It presents the Church as a society founded by Jesus Christ, and commissioned by Him to be the salt of the earth, through the propagation of its ideals in the surrounding world. It traces the gradual unfolding of this mission in the nineteen centuries of the history of the Church, and, referring more particularly to Great Britain, it exhibits the influence of the National Churches on the moral pith and tone of the British peoples. And, then, proceeding to the consideration of the vast and intricate problems of modern life, it discusses the solutions of these problems that are proposed or attempted, dwelling, at some length, on the revolutionary collectivism demanded by many as the only cure of social wrong and ill. By this review, the inquiries pressed on the attention of Christian men are such as these: What has the Church to say to an age whose wealth-lands and woe-lands are so glaringly contrasted? To what extent, and in what ways, is it co-operating with all agencies that aim at social betterment, and is it realising its own proper vocation to regenerate and guide the life of the soul? By what elasticities of method is it adapting its service to the complexities and the perplexities by which it is confronted? Wherein does it need to be

strengthened, it may be reformed, in order that fuller effect may be given to its work?

That the author has satisfactorily realised his intention, he cannot say. He is conscious of the many imperfections that attach to his treatment of a great theme. But he can honestly say that his labour has been a labour of love, and that he has done his best with the resources, the time, and the opportunity, at his command to secure a generous appreciation.

He acknowledges, with deep gratitude, the kindness of his esteemed friend and colleague, Professor Davidson, LL.D., who, in the midst of his onerous duties, undertook the revision of the proof-sheets, and of whose valuable suggestions he has gladly availed himself.

Such as it is, the author sends the treatise forth, in the hope that the charity of those who read it may cover any blemishes which they may detect, and that it may be of some use to the generation he desires to serve according to the will of God.

Chanonry Lodge, Aberdeen,
March 1902.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

CARDINAL POINTS.

PAGE

The features most conspicuous in any survey of Christian civilisation. The study contemplated. The unit in social life. The issue involved in the battle for liberty. Natural rights. Organised social life necessary to the completion of personal life. Sociology. The paramount importance of social subjects. The unity of all agencies that relate to social wellbeing. The Church: its influence on society and social developments; its testimony through the past nineteen centuries. In what sense the word "Church" is employed. The two parts into which the book is divided 1–14

CHAPTER II.

THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF CHRIST'S TEACHING.

All human society gives vitality and continuity to ideas. The ideas and aims that have been made effective by the corporate action of the Church. The three lines along which the proposed investigation shall proceed. The sub-

ject of this chapter. The Jewish environment of Jesus. His recognition of all that formed the core of Israel's nationality—A social order based on righteousness. Approximations to democratic equalities in the provisions of the law. The community and its individual units. Christ incorporated the Jewish ideal, but detached the ideal from that which was merely dispensational. The originality of His teaching. His connexion of the seen and the unseen. The social tendency of His doctrine illustrated in the Sermon on the Mount. Its *summum bonum*. Three features of the conduct which corresponds to the end thus indicated. The social and catholic character of the kingdom as it is presented in Christ's teaching. The adaptiveness of His anthropology to all wholesome developments of life 15–30

CHAPTER III.

THE SOCIAL VOCATION OF THE CHURCH.

The assertion that Christ's ethic contemplates the righteousness of the individual rather than that of a corporate body. To what extent justified. But the formation of an ethical society always in Christ's view. This shewn even in the Sermon on the Mount. The nature of His society. The society the evidence of His kingdom in its two abiding features. The Church an election out of mankind. What election does not mean. The Church a Trustee Body: through which the few are used to bless the many. The consecration of the Church as evidenced in Christ's Intercessory Prayer. The vocation enforced by great regulative truths. The central truth of the Church is the Incarnation. Some lines of objection to this truth discussed. The twofold appeal by which the faith in the Incarnation is strengthened; the appeal to personal affection, in the view of Christ's sacrificing love; the appeal to all that is strenuous and hopeful in the assurance of a living Christ . . 31–52

CHAPTER IV.

THE AGGRESSIVE SOCIAL ACTION OF THE CHURCH.

The interest and the use of Church history. Why it repels many. But what is beneath and behind all records is the real history. The impossibility of summarising such vast expansions. Two epochs selected. One, from the beginning of the history until the peace of Constantine. The other, from the latter half of the middle ages until the Reformation. The beginning at the day of Pentecost. The Christian community in the early morning of Christianity. A characteristic collectivism. New chances and guarantees for civilised life. Disengagement of Christianity from Judaism. Its contact with the Roman Empire. St Paul the pioneer of the more catholic enterprise. His organisation of Christian communities. His missionary circuits. His ideal and aim. The facilities for the extension of the Church offered by the Roman Empire. Why the Church was persecuted. What the Church had become and had done at the period of the Edict of Constantine: how it had struck the social life surrounding it near the base of that life; how it had developed a special type of social life; how it had made a covenant of sympathy with the poor and the distressed; how it had put a new value on human life 53–73

CHAPTER V.

THE AGGRESSIVE SOCIAL ACTION OF THE CHURCH *—continued.*

A new era for Church and for Empire. The religious and social position of the Church at the beginning of the tenth century. A glance back to the Dark Ages. The Empire a Christian Power, with the exception of a brief period, from

the day of Constantine's peace. Justinian's Code and Institutes. Efforts among Barbarians, and the influence of these efforts. Church development on lines parallel to those of the Empire. The growth of the Papacy. The Frankish-Roman Empire. Charlemagne and the Carlovingian dynasty. The climax of Papal assumption, and the subordination of State to Church. The situation in the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages full of contradictions. Feudalism in the first instance a social rather than a political development. The relation of the Church to feudalism. Monachism: its history; its spread. Orders of monks. The debt of civilisation to the religious orders. The abuse of Monachism, and its decline and corruption. The decline of the Papacy. Europe awakening. A day of the Lord. The retrospect, and the features and issues which it has indicated 74–96

CHAPTER VI.

NATIONAL CHURCHES AND THEIR SOCIAL WORK.

The Catholicity of the Church allowing for diversities. Affinities of race and blood. No difficulty in combining diversities with the idea of the one Church in the early period of Christianity. But complications in later periods. The tendency to uniformity in rule and ritual developing as the Papal power developed. Change in the plan of the aggressive work of the Church. Frictions of frequent occurrence. The schism between the East and the West. The national spirit in the British Isles—more marked than in Continental countries. The immemorial nationality of the Church in England. The nationality of the Church in Scotland. The Celtic Church organised according to Celtic ideas, and not according to Roman. Queen Margaret and her work. King David and his work. The nationality evidenced in characteristic Scottish fashion. The parochial economy:

its origin and growth. Tithes, a religious obligation officially recognised. Allotment of tithes. The division and endowment of parishes both in England and in Scotland obscure. The National Churches not mere State Churches. Number of parishes in England at the Reformation. Number in Scotland 97–114

CHAPTER VII.

NATIONAL REFORMED CHURCHES—THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The endeavour towards re-formation. Dangers attendant on this endeavour. The isolating tendency. How the Reformers endeavoured to counteract it. The catholicity of the Reformation. The conception of a world-wide fellowship in the Second Book of Discipline. But the growth of the centrifugal tendency. The equipment of the Protestant National Church of Scotland and its work. The condition of the Scottish people at the time of the Reformation. The constitution of the Church: its scanty resources; its ideality. The fourfold action of the Scottish Church on social life. Testimony borne as to its service. The hindrance to its efficiency occasioned by the rapid growth of population in the nineteenth century. Efforts to multiply agency interrupted by the Disruption. But one issue of Disruption a vast addition to religious machinery. Sir James Graham's Act. Professor James Robertson. The Endowment Scheme. New parishes. Extensions of ministry. The result of all the activity. The duty and opportunity of a National Church 115–133

PART II.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: POPULATION AND PAUPERISM.

Review of previous part of volume. Change of venue. Increase of population previously referred to. Forecasts founded on this increase. The contention of Malthus that the tendency is to multiply beyond the means of subsistence. This kind of prophesying may be dismissed. But there should be a wise providence of mind. Malthusian checks on increase. Preventions to be desiderated. The opposition of the two poles of civilisation. Aggregate wealth: in the United States of America; in Great Britain. Against this may be put the awful prevalence of poverty. Estimates of pauper population: Mr C. Booth's; Local Government Boards'. Pauperism decreasing. Effect of Poor Law. The action of the Church superseded. Experiment of Dr Chalmers in Glasgow. Change of feeling as to parochial relief. Administrative methods. Two classes specially appealing to compassion. Old age pensions. Pension funds. Much in administration of statutory relief that is unsatisfactory. But room for judicious benevolence in connexion with it 135–163

CHAPTER IX.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: POVERTY AND ITS CIRCUMSTANCES.

Poverty not to be measured by pauperism. Statistics of Mr Booth as to population in London between the lines of want and poverty. The question to be considered by the Church. Need of investigation into the causes of poverty. The

distribution of charity. Focussing of charities needed. Charity organisation societies. The opportunity for National Churches. Poverty cannot be dissociated from the features of social life. Some habits and circumstances with which it connects. First, intemperance. The amount of poverty directly attributable to intemperance. But, indirectly, what a vast amount! The sum expended on alcoholic liquors. What can be done? The pioneers of temperance reform. Two points: (1) The personal duty of Christians; (2) the action of the citizenship or State with regard to the traffic in intoxicants. The Royal Commission on Licensing Laws: Majority and minority reports. The duty of Christian citizenship. Lord Peel and the minority report—the basis of a new National Covenant. Counter-attractions. Second, the housing of the people. The housing of the lower side of the population. Glasgow. The Glasgow corporation. Three kinds of agency to deal with houses. Two desiderata as to housing to be pressed. The home as, more than the house, the special sphere of Christian ministry . 164–195

CHAPTER X.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: LABOUR AND THE COMMONWEALTH—SOCIALISM.

A protest, interpreting Socialistic opinion. The term Socialism. Denoting ideas that have found some expression in all times, but gained in force during the nineteenth century. Preparations for them. Utilitarians of the earlier period. Utilitarianism. The wretched condition of many, evidenced by Bread and Chartist Riots. The introduction of steam-power, and its results. The rush from the country into the towns. Children hawking in streets. Karl Marx. Socialistic organisations, Labour Leagues, &c. Need to discriminate. 1. Socialism and democracy. 2. Socialism and communism. 3. Socialism and endeavours to reduce

inequalities. 4. Socialism and extension of powers of State. *Laissez faire* abandoned. An ethical character conceded to the State. Powers of State more freely used to promote social happiness. But socialism more than this. What is it? 196–221

CHAPTER XI.

THE POSITIONS OF SOCIALISM.

The great variety of societies. But the common idea. Modern socialism. Attractive, at many points, to earnest men, who yet have no fellowship with its ulterior aims. Statements relative to socialism differ. Dr Schäffle referred to as an authority. His exposition. The Fabian Society publications. Karl Marx. An attitude of scepticism must be assumed, as to the views and tenets on labour, land, capital. First, The labour question "the burning question of the Europe of to-day." The assertion that "labour is the source of all wealth" criticised. The measurement of value by manual labour criticised. The right of the labourer to the whole produce of the labour criticised. Second, Property in land—"Private property is theft"—a fundamental principle. Two points to be made. Is the distinction between land and other material—viz., that land is God's gift to all, and therefore not property, but that the fruit of labour is not gift but property—justified? And, Is the right of property a right to abuse as well as use? Differences in socialistic theories as to land. The nationalisation of land: how is it to be carried out? Third, Capital. Socialism a revolt against selfishness in capitalists. But all capitalists not selfish. All capitalists not millionaires. Capital represents the investing of any sum in means or instruments of production. Facilities for realising shares in business profits desirable. But difficulties in the way. The reduction of the personal element in the relations of employer and employé, by syndicates on the one hand,

and trades-unions on the other. Competition pronounced the curse of civilisation. Emulation offered as its substitute. Would it be a substitute? Co-operation: a Christian idea. The growth of co-operative societies. But socialism would make co-operation a compulsory method by which all results are to be realised. Socialism takes little account of the wealth and variety of the elements of civilisation . 222–259

CHAPTER XII.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM.

Socialism cannot be regarded merely as an economic system. Its claim is that the polity is the morality. Its moral and religious bearing must be considered. First, the spirit of discontent which it fosters. It has an international propaganda. Thus, the influence of Continental and American sentiment is communicated, and, although views of an extreme character are not widely received, thought is coloured by them. The passion for equality. Equality of condition and personal merit inconsistent standards. A right and a wrong discontent. Second, the relation of socialistic systems to the moral law. Systems often adhered to by those whose moral attitudes are right. But tendencies relating to the family need to be watched. Socialism meets one selfishness by developing another. Its brotherhood too much a class brotherhood. It does not sufficiently realise the need of personal regeneration. Third, the hostility frequently expressed to the worship and the ministry of the Church. The root of this a radical divergence from the religious ideal. Earthliness in prospect and in motive. Labour-churches. The duty of the Church towards socialism. The Church must make its aim fully manifest. Patience is required. Sympathy and co-operation in all honest effort are required. Study of social life required. The Church should be cautious in pronouncements on special issues. The outflow of a spiritual force needed . 260–283

CHAPTER XIII.

SOCIAL-ETHICAL TRENDS.

Tendencies of thought in which sympathy with some of the ideas embodied in socialism is expressed. First, work, with a moral end, the mark of worth and dignity. Ruskin's distinction between work and play. Carlyle and his Gospel of Work. The two men, and no third, whom he recognises. A new ethical ambition stimulated. Second, the ethics of wealth. Wealth a problem as well as poverty. How is it made? used? distributed? Commercial immoralities. The office of wealth. Waste of wealth is sin. Responsibility to God and to society for its administration. Another view given by Ruskin. His attack on political economists. His distinction between wealth, money, and riches. His principle that life is wealth. A conception which has infused an ethical element into political science. Third, the Altruism of the day. Comte and Comtism. Altruism has its religion in itself. But, sometimes, it has a religious hue. Count Tolstoy and Tolstoyism. The influence of these ethical trends apparent in the politics of the day. The promise of a harmonious development of national life. Pessimistic views. But the character of dominating ideals and aims is a hopeful sign 284–307

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SOCIAL WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE PRESENT DAY.

Internal rectifications as well as external readjustments needed. Attacks on Churches as having neglected their temporal mission. The answer to this partly in former chapters. In Scotland, the Church has been in the front rather than in the rear of the onward march. The many social impulses

given by the older race of parish ministers. In the more modern time, social utilities promoted by churchmen, and by agencies of churches. Signs of increasing social activity. The social and the spiritual cannot be absolutely separated. Evangelism and philanthropy. Some instances of organisations aiming at social reformation cited. These settlements bring the more cultured and opulent into direct touch with the needs of the poorer population. They interpret also the breadth of the Christian spirit. Labour colonies. The Salvation Army 308–330

CHAPTER XV.

EFFECTUAL CHURCH MINISTRY.

The Church represents a faith, a society, a propaganda. First, it holds a faith in trust for the good of man. The spread of socialism said to be a token of the decline of religion. Not so. But a decline of Church authority. How can the scepticism as to the message of the Church be disarmed? The part of the answer, relevant to the matter in view, is that the victory must be the victory of faith. One reason for any failure may be uncertainty in the belief of the Church. Reflected in the hesitancy of its voice. The teaching may want in strength, and it may want in wisdom. No reason more widely operative than the separation between the faith and the conduct of Christians. Second, the Church a society, whose calling is to represent its social life to mankind, and to train and give direction to the spirit of citizenship. The evidence of its calling obscured by divisions. Unities in spite of divisions. But the existing outward condition of the Church hinders the effect of its action. Unity in action. Four points essential to this indicated. Third, such union would give new momentum to the social propaganda of the Church. It would develop aggressive work, and make Church life more complete. The desire for complete life and order evidenced in England and in

Scotland. The Commission on the Religious Condition of the People. All Church life is marked by three purposes: (1) To make the house of God more hospitable; (2) to develop, not mere agency, but the contact of person with person; (3) to call forth all resources of energy and vitality. "The rights of man and the rights of God." The fulfilment of the Church's social mission . . . 331–357

INDEX 358

PART I.

THE SOCIAL VOCATION OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER I.

CARDINAL POINTS.

In any survey of the civilisation which we distinguish as Christian, the three features which most distinctly impress the mind are — the development of the individual, the constitution and influence of civic societies, and the action of the moral and spiritual forces which it is the mission of the Church to propagate. Our study is, in the main, that of the frictions between these constituents, in consequence of which well-being is hindered, and of the efforts to reduce such frictions and to promote the reciprocity of service that is essential to the building up of a community in truth and in justice.

The unit in social life is the individual. He is more than a unit indeed; he is also a unity: a small world, but still a world, with the separateness in character, in aptitudes, in resources, which we denote by the term individuality. Hence the

difficulty in adjusting his place and claim with the demands of the body politic, which is his environment. The battle of liberty has turned on the issue, What are his rights? What is his due? How can personal freedom be harmonised with social order? The century which has closed is remarkable for the earnestness with which this issue has been regarded, and for the efforts towards a more complete solution of it which have been made.

In the background of all such endeavours is the question as to rights which may be called natural. The state of nature, on which towards the beginning of last century so much eloquence was expended, is little better than an imagination.[1] The savage, free and independent, existed only when the savage was a solitary. When men formed into companies or tribes interferences with liberty began, and the equality of all was impossible. These interferences were the accompaniment of civilisation. If we go back to the early periods of civilised life we find the vast majority in thraldom: men were supervised and controlled at every step of their existence. Their

[1] Brissot, Mably, Rousseau, maintained that the primitive condition of men was one of equality; that individuals had no exclusive rights of property; that the right of every person to the use of the earth was determined by his need.

right to live was conditioned on an obligation to serve. And in the history of Great Britain, even to a comparatively recent date, the area of freedom allowed to the unit was circumscribed by minute and often vexatious regulations.[1] Society took the individual in hand, and allowed him only so much as it judged to be for the advantage of the governing classes or the supposed good of the State. Our conceptions have been widened. We now recognise that in human nature there is a charter of freedom for every one, and that every one born into citizenship is entitled to the opportunity of exercising and fulfilling his capacities, intellectual, moral, and volitional. None can be regarded as only instruments for the furtherance of ends in which they have themselves no direct share: the object of all legislation, the trend of all social action, is in the direction of enlarging the spaces of personal energy, of placing tools, means of production, within the reach of all, and protecting all in the enjoyment of at least a portion of the fruits of their labour. And since the individual is a moral agent, with an ethical consciousness which witnesses to an eternally right and wrong, the aim of political endeavour has been to liberate the conscience from all that

[1] *E.g.*, Enactments as to games, prices, clothing, wages, covenants, &c.

shackles it, so that the soul may be free to follow the voice which it recognises as the voice of truth, and to work out its own salvation.

But the freedom which is indispensable to the completion of personal life can be secured only through the organisation of social life. The individual neither lives to himself nor lives by himself. "By nature," said Aristotle, "man is a social creature." It is by his action on others and their reaction on him, by his affinities or antipathies, by his relations of many kinds, that he knows himself, that he expands, that he realises his selfhood. It may be true that "all men seek their own." But two qualifying considerations are also true. The one is, that each man needs to be protected from such a seeking of their own by others as shall be an injury to him, and that others need to be protected from such a seeking of his own by each man as shall be an injury to them. Self-love is a legitimate motive; but, without imposing restraints that may impair its vigour, the rankness which makes it basely selfish must be eliminated. And the other consideration is, that men cannot have their own apart from the co-operation of their neighbour. All that can be regarded as the property of a person is not only a wealth made and possessed by him; it also represents a wealth to which many have contributed.

Thus, as John Stuart Mill has put it, "the social state is at once so natural, so necessary, and so habitual to man, that, except in some unusual circumstances, or by an effort of voluntary abstraction, he never conceives himself otherwise than as a member of a body; and this association is riveted more and more as mankind are further removed from the state of savage independence."[1]

Society, then, is the second of the chief constituents of civilisation. Its design is, or should be, not to exploit but to complete the individual; so to connect, co-ordinate, and discipline all powers and energies that the members in particular, whilst contributing to a common wealth, shall at the same time be enabled to perfect their own life.[2] It imposes checks on individualism, which without such checks would degenerate into anarchy. It represents order; but order is the guardian of liberty, the object at which it aims being that neither shall a man work ill to his neighbour nor shall his neighbour work ill to him, that rights shall be balanced by duties, and that

[1] Utilitarianism, chap. iii. pp. 46, 47.

[2] "Man does not at first naturally think of himself as an independent individual, but rather as part of a system, and this system may, in a very real sense, be called a self, since it is the universe to which the individual refers the conduct of his life."—Mackenzie, Manual of Ethics, p. 117.

by the maintenance of this balance the welfare of the whole and the welfare of the unit shall be harmonised. "A society can have no happiness which is not the happiness of its separate members, any more than an edition of 'Hamlet' can have any dramatic qualities which do not exist between the covers of each separate copy. In this respect social science presents an absolute contrast to physical. The physical unit is of interest to us only for the sake of the aggregate. The social aggregate is of interest to us only for the sake of the unit."[1]

The most modern of sciences is that of Sociology—"the science of the origin, growth, and welfare of the collective life of mankind." During the nineteenth century, and largely owing to the impulse given by Comte, scientific form was given to what was previously an undigested mass of information and observation as to the history of man. An attentive survey of the successive civilisations in which the evolution of society is traced warranted generalisations; and, though the knowledge of all the links in the succession is still wanting, the purpose fulfilling through the ages, and even the process by which the purpose is being accomplished, are now more evident. Not only have phenomena been system-

[1] Mallock, Contemporary Review, 1895, p. 890.

atised; principles and laws which bear on both the present and the future have been expounded. And more and more these, with their applications and relevant issues, are studied. For the tendency of the most earnest thought and action of the day is social. The most inspiring ideals are social. "The social question is the religious question." Many causes of many kinds contribute to the investiture of subjects bearing on the constitution and the methods of organised social life with a paramount importance.

These subjects connect with the domains of economics and politics, but they are not on this account to be regarded as outwith the purview of a treatise which especially regards the work of the Church. It may be argued that the sphere of the Church is ethical rather than economic, whereas the sphere of social science is economic rather than ethical. This may be so: the main line of reference in both cases may be correctly stated; but sciences or agencies which refer to human wellbeing must include, directly or indirectly, man's condition at all its points. Their ultimate aim is practical—the improvement and elevation of man's estate. And whatever affects one or another class of facts relating to this, whatever appeals to one or another side of the complex human nature, whatever is occupied

with one or another series of relations, impinges necessarily on all other classes, sides, and series. No hard-and-fast line can be drawn between ethics and economics. If we are bent on ascertaining and promoting the conditions of a healthy collectivism, it is not too much to say that we shall find the most vital of these conditions to be ethical. So inevitable and constant is the glance of sociology towards moral standards, qualities, ideals, that it has been not unfitly described as "ethics applied to the economic situation."

The ethical reference suggests the third of the factors of Christian civilisation—the Church. To overlook the influence which the Church has exercised on the social life of the past nineteen centuries is impossible; to depreciate that influence is to oppose the verdict of history. Opinions may vary as to the causes of the spread of Christianity and the reasons of the hold which it obtained on nations; they may vary in the judgment formed on the means and methods of its diffusion; they may vary in their estimate of the extent of the benefit conferred on the peoples which have come under its sway: but the reality and vastness of its power cannot with fairness be challenged. For long, it worked under the surface of society with, as we may say, "a secret hand." Silently, as compared with other systems,

it leavened the lump. Then it emerged as a force which had undermined the heathenism of the Roman Empire, and had penetrated into regions beyond. A new type of brotherhood, with principles and laws of cohesion permeated by a new ideality, was established, and the world understood that the Galilean had conquered. M. Guizot reminds us that in civilisation there is "a something more" than individual interests, than political combinations, than racial developments, than social power and happiness,—there is humanity.[1] It is this "something more" which the Church has not only emphasised, but, it may be said, in view of the amplitudes given to it, has created. In its preaching of Christ to the world it declared Him to be the archetypal humanity, in Whom is the life which is the light of men, and in union with Whom local and tribal distinctions are only as the differing notes of a perfect harmony. Lacordaire was not a mere rhetorician when he declared that the first Church of Jesus Christ was humanity. The consummation for which the Church prays and strives is a redeemed and glorified humanity, the former things—sorrow, pain, sin, death—having passed away. And through the ages its testimony, not so full and clear as it should have

[1] History of Civilisation in Europe, Lecture I.

been, but still audible in the midst of the struggles, the fevers, the ambitions, of social life, has always been, "Justice, righteousness, love, are the crowning features of the humanity which is in God's image, and the chief elements in the real wealth of nations."

It has been observed that "there is no one word which, from the variety of acceptations, hath bred greater difference in the Church of God than the word Church."[1] In the pages of this book the word is employed in its least controversial sense. We are not concerned with articles of faith, with creeds and confessions, with disputes relating either to doctrine or to government. We hold with Hooker when, after referring to "schisms, factions, and such other evils whereunto the body of the Church is subject," he adds, "Sound and sick remain both of the same body, so long as both parts retain by outward profession that vital substance of truth which maketh Christian religion to differ from theirs which acknowledge not our Lord Jesus Christ the blessed Saviour of mankind, give no credit to His glorious Gospel, and have His sacraments, the seals of eternal life, in derision."[2] It was the faith of which Jesus

[1] Covel's Defence of Hooker, art. xi.

[2] Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, vol. ii. pp. 302, 303.

Christ is "the author and perfecter" that, after its introduction, revolutionised the spirit of the societies and commonwealths into which it penetrated, and finally moulded the ethical ideals of European civilisation. And the point specially in evidence is, that this faith was propagated by means of an institution, with laws and officers and ordinances peculiar to itself, for which the authority of Christ and the guidance of the Spirit of truth Whom Christ had promised were claimed. Under the name of the Church we shall comprehend "every such politic society of men as did and doth in religion hold that truth which is proper to Christianity."[1] Our outlook shall be, not ecclesiastical constitution and history, but the social service of the Christian collectivism. On the more spiritual work and results of the Church we shall not dwell, the purpose being to indicate the relation of Christian ethics and disciplines to the evolution and manifestation of the life of man, or, as otherwise it may be stated, to the betterment of the individual as well as of society.

In the elucidation of its theme, this treatise divides into two parts. In the one part, the Church is in the foreground, and the topics considered will be, its social vocation, its aggres-

[1] Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, vol. iii. p. 253.

sive action on civic societies, the position and influence of National Churches, especially the National Church of Scotland. In the other part, the social life of Great Britain is in the foreground: its problems, burdens, moral and political trends, will be dealt with, and the reference to the Church will bear on its attitude towards the issues thus presented, and its endeavour to meet the exigencies of the situation by which it is confronted. The subject is one of great and varied interest — too vast, indeed, to be adequately considered within the limits which must be observed. All that can be anticipated or aimed at is a consideration which, though necessarily incomplete, shall be candid, honest, inspired by a sincere desire to know and express "whatsoever things" connected with it "are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just." It cannot be affirmed that in the thought and the utterance there is no bias: let it be frankly allowed that there is, and that the bias is in the direction of Bishop Westcott's saying, "The proof of Christianity which is prepared by God, as I believe, for our times is a Christian society filled with one spirit in two forms — Righteousness and Love."[1]

[1] The Incarnation and Common Life.

CHAPTER II.

THE SOCIAL ASPECT OF CHRIST'S TEACHING.

"ALL Human Society," writes Dean Church, "is the receptacle, nursery, and dwelling-place of ideas, shaped and limited according to the nature of the society—ideas which live and act on it and in it; which are preserved, passed on, and transmitted from one generation to another; which would be merely abstractions or individual opinions if they were not endowed with the common life which their reception in a society gives them."[1] Now, with reference to the Church, the inquiry which the truth contained in these words suggests is, What are the ideas, principles, aims which have found a home in it, which have received a special determination, and, in accordance with this determination, have been made effective by its corporate action, which have been propagated from generation to generation, aglow with the life

[1] Oxford House Papers, No. xvii.

imparted to them by their assimilation to the thoughts, and their enforcement by the energies, of living men? It is an inquiry whose range is far more extensive than the purpose of this treatise necessitates or warrants. We must exclude from our purview theology and ritual, except in so far as they bear on the subjects to which we are limited — the truths and influences embodied in the Church, through whose operation currents of sympathy have been formed, manners and morals have been moulded, higher types of unity have been constituted, and the conditions both of communal and of individual life have been elevated. The points of such investigation are included in the phrase, the social vocation of the Church; and the three lines along which it is proposed that this investigation shall proceed are, this vocation as interpreted, first, in the teaching or the mind of Christ; second, in the character and obligations of the Church's election; and third, in the conceptions which dominate the Christian consciousness and are the perennial springs of the Christian inspiration. The first of these interpretative topics will be the subject of this chapter.

In the Gospels, Jesus, the "teacher come from God," is set before us with a Jewish environment. A nation or people appropriates its units. To

the units the nation marks an inheritance "of aptitudes, stored materials, a thousand and one traditions of the past." Jesus did not renounce this inheritance. On the contrary, he accepted it. He observed the national customs. He kept the national festivals. He began his ministry by reading from the scroll of Isaiah. He pointed to the ancient Scriptures as the verification of His Messiahship. He wept over Jerusalem, and exclaimed through His tears, "How often would I have gathered thy children together!"[1] All that made the core and inner truth of Israel's corporate existence was recognised in His doctrine. It was only the shell which had guarded the kernel "until the time of the reformation" that was set aside; the kernel itself was conserved, in order that it might be completed and glorified. "Think not," He protests, "that I came to destroy the Law and the Prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."[2]

His Church, therefore, is the heir to all that, as distinguished from the merely dispensational, is divinely true in the old Jewish polity. Now the divinely true thing in it was the idea of a social order based on righteousness, on "doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God."[3] The Church and the nation were not regarded as

[1] St Mat. xxiii. 37. [2] St Mat. v. 17. [3] Micah vi. 8.

two separate factors in the national life. They were regarded as one. The kingdom was a kingdom of priests. It was bound together by divine laws, and by a worship which consecrated all the aspects of life. Every Jew was called to realise that he was a member of a consecrated nationality—bound to it, to every other member of it, and, with every other member, to Jehovah. Was not Israel Jehovah's "son," His first-born, His peculiar treasure? To be faithful to Him, to keep His laws, and be loyal to the brotherly covenant, was the one imperative obligation of citizenship. The consequence of this mystical humanism was, and to this day—"scattered and peeled" though the Jewish race may be—is, an intense solidarity, and, within the tribal limits, a fervent and vigorous social life. Under the theocracy, there were approximations to democratic equalities. The provisions of the Law did not expressly prohibit, but they softened, the harsher features of class and grade. Underlying them was the sense of an inalienable reverence that was due to the person of man or woman; and in many peculiar enactments, such as those of the jubilee (perhaps never fully observed)—liberations from servile condition were contemplated. It was held that every unit of the sacred nationality was entitled to the care of the State. The poor were

to be helped, the infirm and aged were to be treated with pity. Even the stranger within the gates had his rights. Nor was the responsibility one-sided. If the community, as a whole, placed itself behind its members, its members were reared and trained in the sense of their duty to the community. The male child in earliest infancy received the seal of membership. Through the family he obtained his place in the nation. By means of the family discipline he was educated in the life of citizenship. The honouring of father and mother was emphasised as the condition of material as well as spiritual prosperity,[1] of fountains playing on a land of corn and wine, and of heavens dropping down dew. Thus a fellowship was established whose first commandment was, "Love Jehovah, thy God, with all thy might," and whose second commandment, like to the first, was, "Love thy neighbour as thyself."

Now, all this was assumed by Christ and passed on by Him to His organised discipleship. There was no need to make a brand-new ideal of society; the ideal was there, requiring only to be separated from racial exclusiveness, from a ceremonial which had outlived its day, and from a dead-weight of traditionalism which had obscured its beauty, and, thus separated, to obtain ampler outlines,

[1] Exod. xx. 12.

freer expression, and a more efficient internal dynamic. This Jesus did, and in Him the ancient social order lives, risen again and fulfilled in the kingdom of God, which it is the mission of His Church to realise on the earth.

The originality of His teaching did not consist in the saying of new things, or the propounding of new truths. "He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes," and, in respect both of their form and of their content, His utterances expressed what was incomprehensible to men "whose hearts had waxed gross." But that which He taught was old, inasmuch as it was of God, who is from everlasting. "My teaching," He testified, "is not Mine, but His that sent Me."[1] "I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I speak these things."[2] Although, being of God, His doctrine was hidden from "the princes of this world," yet there had been, in all the times and in all the counsels of the truly wise, scintillations of the light which was lustrous in Him—"the Light which lighteth every man coming into the world"[3]—the Light which was especially luminous in the people whose Judge, whose Lawgiver, whose King was Jehovah. Jesus interpreted the truth into which holy prophets since the world

[1] St John vii. 16. [2] St John viii. 28. [3] St John i. 9.

began had searched, but which He saw in the Father. He was, He is, the Truth. His words are wonderful flashes, in which God is revealed to man as the Father, and man is revealed to himself as the son, and individual men, sharers in this sonship, as brethren. In the universes of thought which they open, we discern the "altar-stairs sloping through darkness up to God." If, in view of this, we inquire into the secret of the originality, we see that it means the crystallising of scattered rays, the unifying of mind and will by the knowledge which is life eternal; the newness gained by the disclosure of the centre to which all the lines of the eternally good and true converge; the newness of irradiated perception, of vitalised energy, of magnificent vistas; the newness, above all, of the glory beheld in His own personality—the one unique Manhood, full of grace and truth, in whom

> "the Word had breath and wrought
> With human hands the Creed of Creeds
> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought."[1]

Thus, conserving the spirit of the old order by declaring the reality in which it is completed, by disengaging what is vital in it from the outward forms through which the things given of God

[1] In Memoriam, 36.

were adapted to a rudimentary period in the world's education, Christ has unfolded the principles of all wholesome social evolution. It is true that He connects the seen with the unseen, that he regards human life not so much in its temporal as in its spiritual and eternal aspects. But He connects; He does not put asunder what His Father had joined together. If He reaches to "the spiritual beyond the natural," He holds "firmly to the natural" in order that He may so reach. M. Renan has argued, and many have similarly argued, "The aim of Christianity was in no respect the perfecting of human society or the increase of the sum of individual happiness. One does not think of decorating the hovel in which he is to remain for only a moment."[1] Is not this a travesty of Christ's Christianity? To Him, the earth is never a hovel. In it, He sees His Father's house. Its sights and sounds have an inexpressible charm to His eye. Its duties and demands are enforced alike by His precepts and His example. "The whole temporal show is related" to the spiritual, not in a poor way, but "royally and built up to eterne significance through the open arms of God."[2] The more vividly this royal relation is realised, the more fully, He tells

[1] Quoted in Prof. Bruce's 'Kingdom of God,' p. 131.
[2] Aurora Leigh, Book 7.

us, will the significance of all life and of all the facts of life be discerned. It is the vocation of His disciple to aim at perfection, at the perfecting of man's estate in the situation and in the circumstances which are present to him, and thus to "make the heaven he hopes indeed his home."

Let us see how this, the social trend of Christ's doctrine, is illustrated in the discourse which is frequently cited as "the ethical manifesto of Jesus." The two questions in connexion with which the substance of the Sermon on the Mount[1] may be summarised are, What is the good to be desired as the chief end of human endeavour? and, What is the conduct by means of which this end is to be attained?

The answer to these questions is explicit.

Christ's *summum bonum* is the Old Testament ideal which the prophets of Israel had expounded, but freed from the limitations under which it was presented "to them of old time," and clothed with a higher force and authority. The commandment, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," gives a law of life which is opposed to aims that begin and end with self, that make a mere selfish earthly gain the dominating purpose and interest. It includes a legitimate self-love. That a man be true to himself,

[1] St Mat. v.-vii.

that he develop his individuality in the aims and preferences which are natural to it, is implied. But the contention is that his real blessedness cannot be found so long as he lives like an isolated individual, that it can be found only by harmonising his existence with a divine order which is law for him and for all men. This order is to be his first and supreme care; the seeking of it in all that marks his opportunity is to be his most strenuous effort. Thus, and thus only, will he prove himself to be the child of that all-loving Father "who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." The kingdom of God is the kingdom of the Father, and the righteousness of God, being the righteousness of the Father, can be possessed only in a life filial towards Him and brotherly towards all—the life whose distinguishing features are humility, reverence, sincerity, devotion to human wellbeing, self-renouncing, self-sacrificing love.

Without minutely analysing the elements of the conduct which corresponds to the end thus indicated, three points in the sermon of Christ may be noted. First, there is the inner qualification. The Hebrew morality is distinguished from both the Greek and the Roman by the intensity with which it insists on the exercise of the moral

will, on truth in the inward parts, as the prime condition of rectitude. It has a more searching view than that which was possible when the one word τὸ καλὸν was used to signify both the beautiful and the noble. "The Greek philosophers," as it has been observed, "got into trouble through their failure to distinguish between moral conduct and art. When the moral life was regarded as beautiful, they were tempted to look on it as if it were simply an artistic product."[1] Now Christ, in the first words of this discourse, makes character the foundation of the righteous life. The Beatitudes, in which He sketches the several sides of the happy or blessed man, are not outlines of the merely beautiful; they are outlines of a goodness which involves denials of self and strenuous moral effort. Supplemented by the striking sentences which exhibit His claim to the authority of the divine Lawgiver, they pierce "to the dividing of soul and spirit, and are quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."[2] Further, the attitude of the soul towards the Father, as the object of supreme worship, and towards the neighbour-man in the exercise of benevolence, is depicted as an attitude entirely removed from the self-consciousness, the posing for effect, which is the fruitful

[1] Mackenzie's Manual of Ethics, p. 30. [2] Heb. iv. 12.

source of hypocrisy or part-acting—an attitude of joyous surrender to the holy will of God, of a giving and doing in which the eye is single and through which treasures are "laid up in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Finally, the principles and references which are to rule all transactions are presented. The life is to be lived frankly in the world, yet the mere lower world-things are not to be the main prospect. Happiness is a natural desire, but to pursue happiness as the end of action is to lose it. The purity and the liberty of the soul are not to be imperilled by the corrosive influence of carking cares and petty strivings. Food and raiment are things needful; in the endeavour after what is worthiest and noblest they will be added. The tendency to judge others is to be cribbed, cabined, and confined: men should judge themselves rather than their neighbours. For all, the golden rule is to do to others as they would have others do to them. A sordid commercialism is unworthy of the son of God. Let him realise, on the one hand, the brave independence which is the result of a constant dependence on God, and on the other, the responsibilities of the brotherly covenant. Let him set his affection, not on what can be won for self, but rather on what self can win

for others. Let him merge the personal in the social, in the kingdom of the Father. This is the strait gate through which the Christian disciple enters into the amplitude of his inheritance. This is the house-building on the rock, "firm and sure eternally." This is to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect. This is the law of the brotherhood which Christ, with His emphatic "Verily, verily I say unto you," proclaims to His follower.

The Sermon on the Mount epitomises the ethical truth which, in one form or another, is expressed in all Christ's teaching. He individualises, but if He insists on personal repentance, personal faith, personal regeneration, it is because this is essential to the realisation of the blessings of the kingdom of God. The end of His calling of men is citizenship in this kingdom. Its nature, its conditions, its aims, are the subject which pervades His utterance. In His parables, He traces the analogies to it which are "writ large" in the natural world. Baur contended that the kingdom, as held before the Jewish mind by Jesus, was the fulfilment of Israel's theocratic hopes; and this is so far true. But the idea of the Hebrew theocracy is spiritualised and elevated. Employing figures of speech "understanded by

the people," Jesus speaks of the "sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob"; but He describes those who shall sit down as coming from the east and the west and the north and the south, whilst some who claimed the privileges of the seat as the right of their covenant shall be cast out.[1] Mere nationality, mere external title, He declares, cannot count. There must be the inward fitness as well as the outward seal — the baptism with the Spirit and the baptism with water. And the theocracy itself, in His representation, is not an exclusive Church-State. It is not a State with such distinct political outlines that men shall be able to exclaim, "Lo, it is there." Neither is it a mere hazy cloudland. He conceives of it as having a visibility, as a society with the tokens and characteristics of a society. But it is free from the complications of human governments and ambitions. It is an ethical commonwealth, descending from God out of heaven that it may pervade and sanctify and enrich all nations and peoples in all their life. It is to take shape in His Church, though, in its full and proper glory, it transcends His Church; it is to be ever so far revealed that men shall discern what in its nature and in its purpose it is, and that it

[1] St Luke xiii. 29.

shall draw men towards it, supplying the bonds of an ever-perfecting sympathy, reconciling them to God, and linking them together in the love which is more than mere justice, which is the fulfilling of law. In one of His word-pictures, Jesus compares it to a great supper prepared by a king, to which those who, by covenant position, are bidden will not come—all beginning to make excuse. The invitation which they reject is passed to the waifs of street and lane, of highway and hedge, and by the compulsions of grace they are brought in that the king's house may be filled.[1] In this similitude, the social and catholic character of the kingdom is portrayed. It interprets the supper of humanity—the highest good of life. Poverty is a disintegrating, separatist force. Men, in their poverty, wandering wearily, halt and maimed, in highway and hedge, are called from their isolations into fellowship, into communion with each other, into the common participation of the wealth which is theirs by the gift of God. It was for the establishment of this brotherhood, for the founding of this commonwealth in the house of humanity, that Christ lived, and taught, and suffered, and died. His prospect is that which is sketched in another of His com-

[1] St Luke xiv. 16-24.

parisons—that in which he traces the growth of the grain of mustard-seed, less than all seeds, into the tree greater than herbs, which overspreads the earth, "so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in its branches."[1] There is an infinite capacity of expansion to all sorts and conditions of men, to all diversities and developments of life, in the word of Him who is the Word of God and the Son of man. It is not too much to say that "His anthropology contains the germ of all manner of social improvement in the earthly life of man."[2]

[1] St Mat. xiii. 31, 32.

[2] The Kingdom of God, p. 131.

CHAPTER III.

THE SOCIAL VOCATION OF THE CHURCH.

In the previous chapter, the social aspect of Christ's teaching was indicated. More or less, such an aspect must be impressed on every system of thought which relates to human conduct; certainly, in any consideration of the words of Jesus it is impossible to overlook it. But, to recur to a point already glanced at, it is frequently urged that His ethic contemplates the righteousness of the individual rather than that of a corporate body. The assertion is not without justification. It was no part of His plan to interfere with existing political conditions. His kingdom was in the world, but it was not of the world. Neither did He come directly into collision with any world-realm, nor did He undertake to regulate matters connected with property and administration or with civil issues between man and man. His purpose was

to create a social conscience by first purifying and uplifting the standard of the individual conscience. We interpret His mind when we argue, "Make the members of a community personally righteous, inspire them at least with the feeling that 'Right is right and God is God.' Give them a lofty type of rectitude, and imbue them with a passion for rectitude: in so doing, you lay the axe at the root of all political injustice, and secure the only enduring basis of public morality." But Christ did more than work indirectly, through the regeneration of personal character, towards the improvement of communal life. He had always in His view the formation of a society which should mirror the divine order, the kingdom of God; a society by whose ministries and in whose membership individual souls should be nourished and strengthened in goodness, and which, "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies,"[1] should propagate its ideal in the civic societies surrounding it. Even in the Sermon on the Mount, representing the earlier stage of His teaching, the unity of His disciples is the objective. Looking on them, He said, "Ye are the salt of the earth."[2] He pointed to the arena of their action, the earth,

[1] Eph. iv. 16.

[2] St Mat. v. 13.

and He reminded them that they are one body called to do one thing—to salt this earth, nay, to be themselves in their unity the salt, making human life pure and wholesome through the permeation of it by the divine life which He would infuse into them. And, again, He said, "Ye are" (not merely lights to, but in their unity) "the light of the world. A city set on a hill" (and such a city, a *civitas Dei*, they are) "cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven."[1] For, Christ knew man. Man needs more than a philosophy however true. He is swayed by the concrete, not the abstract. Plato idealised a republic. His idealisation excites only a speculative interest. His republic is *in nubibus*. The best object-lesson in righteousness is a society bound to the pursuit and practice of righteousness by its very constitution. This is the character of the society which He organised. Its principle of cohesion is a love which reproduces His love to men. Its vital force is His Spirit dwelling in it as the organism which holds Him the Head. Its purpose is to fill up what is lacking of His sufferings, to articulate His thought, to carry out His will to save

[1] St Mat. v. 14, 16.

men's lives, to be the evidence and the missionary of His kingdom in its two abiding features of Sonship and Brotherhood.

The *Ecclesia*, the Church, is not a mere association of persons having a common cult and resolving to diffuse their faith and worship. It is not made by them, and it is not dissoluble at their pleasure. It encompasses them. It adopts them into it. It presents them with a nurture and training by means of which the conscience is educated in the responsibilities of the Christian profession. It is an election out of mankind, and those who are in it are an elect race.

The term "election" is a stumbling-block to many. But that over which they stumble is not so much the thing which it denotes as the use which is made of it in theories and definitions. The principle of limitations which it implies is one that is apparent in every department of nature, in every sphere of life, in the history of the past, in the facts of the present. It is comprehended in the plan of the all-good Orderer. But whoso is wise and observant of the whole truth may understand His loving-kindness. The elect or higher forms of plant-life are serviceable, as showing the potentialities of the species, and as suggesting ways by which vitality may be more fully developed.

The elect or gifted minds are "lent out" for the benefit of all; the products of their genius or of their labour are the enrichment of their universe. Nations have their distinctive elections. They are limited. They have their special aptitudes, testimonies, characteristics, by which they are circumscribed, but through which they contribute to the sum-total of the forces that act on mankind. Now, it is this law or principle which we recognise in the vocation of the Church. Holy Scripture has enforced it. In the far-away past, it represents the family of Abraham as elected. A secret of the Lord was committed to this family. Why? In order that the secret might be preserved, and that it might have, as thus preserved, an ever-widening area of influence. "Thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."[1] The family increased and became a people. This people, Israel, was elected. It was separated from other nations. It was distinguished above other nations. Unto it were committed the oracles of God. Why? In order that in its history and literature it might be the guardian of a lofty monotheism, of a conception of righteousness which was the germ of truth that had "waked to perish never." "The Law and the Prophets," said Athanasius, "were

[1] Gen. xii. 2, 3.

a sacred school of the knowledge of God and of spiritual life for the whole world."[1] The Church marks a still wider circle in the election of God. As we have already seen, it is the inheritor of the promises announced in the ages before the day of Christ. But it holds these as fulfilled in the new covenant which has been "enacted on even better promises."[2] Why is it thus chosen and endowed? In order that it may impart the knowledge which is life eternal. It must always look not only into but beyond itself. Does Christ pray for the men whom the Father gave Him out of the world? He does this with a view to the fulfilment of the mission, "that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me."[3] Solemnly He reminds these men that they had not chosen Him, but that He had chosen them and appointed them, that they should "go and bear fruit."[4] And the entire world of man is described as the sphere of their movement. The experience of St Paul, formerly "a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious," naturally induced him to give a more individualistic complexion to the truth of election; but he also regards the Church in its unity as the "accepted in the Beloved,"[5] and, as the accepted,

[1] De Incarnatione, 12.
[2] Heb. viii. 6.
[3] St John xvii. 21.
[4] St John xv. 16.
[5] Eph. iv. 6.

the demonstration of His grace to principalities and powers, and the ordained agent of His grace in its world-wide reference, making "all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages has been hid in God."[1] St Peter speaks of the Church as "an elect race"; elect, for a purpose by which all are to be benefited, "That ye should show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."[2]

The mistake in the harsher modes of Calvinism is, that election is too much disjoined from this wider reference, and from the supreme obligation which is covered by it. Election is so defined as practically to limit the love of God, as an active force "bringing salvation," to those who have been ordained to everlasting life. It is not regarded as a means to an end—the blessing of mankind. Let us settle it that election does not mean that some are exclusive recipients of the divine favour, but that those who freely receive, receive in order that they may freely give. What they have they hold for the good of others. When a will bequeathing an estate is made, the first part of the instrument is the nomination of trustees, the constitution of a trustee body. That body is elected. The estate

[1] Eph. iii. 9. [2] 1 Peter ii. 9.

is confided to it. But is it merely for the benefit of the trustees? Certainly not, but in order that the intentions of the one whose will is declared may be realised. The visible Church of Jesus Christ is the trustee body which He has constituted, not to monopolise His love but to be His executive in carrying out the desire of His love to the uttermost, in the redemption of the world.

The view thus presented has been admirably stated by the late Professor Bruce: "Election is but the method by which Christ uses the few to bless the many. Only when so conceived is it Scriptural or wholesome. When it is thought of as involving a monopoly of divine favour and reprobation of all without, as it was by the Jews in our Lord's day, then the salt loses its savour, and the light is extinguished by being placed under a bushel. The principle, natural law in the spiritual world, is emphatically false here. In nature the few are chosen and the many are ruthlessly cast away; the fit survive and the unfit perish, and the unconscious cosmos sheds no tear. In the kingdom of God it is far otherwise. The chosen few seek the good of the many; the fit strive to preserve the unfit. This is their very vocation, and when they cease to pursue it they themselves become unfit, useless, reprobate."[1]

[1] The Kingdom of God, pp. 256, 257.

Here, then, is the vocation of the Church constituted and ordained by Christ. Referring to this ordination in His intercessory prayer to the Father, He says, "As Thou didst send Me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."[1] This is the consecration of His Church to the end of the times. It is separated to Christ Himself, that it may be the body through which He acts in His revelation to men of the possibilities of their life, and in His longing to heal all manner of withering sickness and crippling disease — working ever towards the sublime moment when God, Who is light and love, shall be all in all.

Granting, however, that the vocation of the Church to purify the springs and to elevate the conditions of social life is expressed in the teaching of Jesus, and in its constitution and ordination by Him, how far, it may be asked, is this vocation enforced by the truths which all who profess and call themselves Christians accept as pertaining to the essence of their profession? Societies or fraternities, however excellent in their aims, are almost certain to lose their hold when the original impulse which resulted in their found-

[1] St John xvii. 18, 19.

ation is shorn of its freshness, unless they h e the permanent support of definite and ever-potent principles of action. Because of the want of this support famous unions had their day—often a brief one—and ceased to be. The philosophical fellowships of antiquity — the Garden, the Academy, the Porch—gradually dwindled away. Religious sanctions have an enduring efficacy: they may sustain systems for centuries; but these systems become embodiments of a tradition rather than forces of life when they lack in a faith which, from the centres both of reason and feeling, works by love. Has the Christian Church such a faith? Is there that in its content which irresistibly, unrestingly, impels to the service of humanity?

The reply is, that in the Christian consciousness there is an apprehension that commands thought, there is an affection that commands devotion, there is an assurance that commands hope. These are the dominating influences of the humanitarianism of the Church.

One of its central verities is the Incarnation. With the exposition of dogma we are not now concerned. But there is an article in a symbol that Christendom East and West holds in honour, which, as bearing on our subject, we cannot overlook—"I believe in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of the Father, . . . Who for

us men, and for our salvation, became man."[1] More than this need not be said; when we say more we are in danger of losing ourselves in metaphysical subtleties. There is wisdom as well as pathos in the words of one of the early Fathers, "We are compelled to attempt what is unattainable, to climb where we cannot reach, to speak what we cannot utter; instead of the mere adoration of faith, we are compelled to intrust the deep things of religion to the perils of human expression."[2]

The discussion of the many issues that connect with the Incarnation is beyond the limits prescribed for this volume. But a brief glance at two or three lines of objection will tend to place the issue that is within the limits more fully before the mind.

It is asserted by many, as a reason for dismissing all consideration of it, that the conception is one which it is impossible to grasp. To this it is sufficient to reply, in the language which Herbert Spencer connects with the idea of the Absolute, "It is true that we are totally unable to conceive any such higher mode of being. But this is not a reason for questioning its existence; it is rather the reverse."[3]

[1] Nicene Creed. [2] Hilary, De Trinitate, 2. 2, 4.
[3] First Principles, p. 209.

A more serious difficulty is indicated in the argument of others, that the idea of a divine-human Personality is inconsistent with the acknowledged principles of evolution. But may it not be answered, first, that the utmost which can be maintained is, that such a Personality stands outside what we know of the facts of nature? But we know not all. Natural science has not read all the secrets of God and of the universe; and there are other data on which to base our reasoning than those of natural science. And, further, if, even having regard to such evolutionary processes as we are able partially to follow, we can discern variations of type constituted by the selection of highly organised individuals, making new developments and beginning new species, is it not credible that the history and the experience of man should be summed up in One akin to us, but higher than us, in whom the Life which is the light of men should be as fully expressed as is possible under the conditions of humanity? All that is true and healthy is ever struggling upwards to completer realisations; is it unnatural, though it may take us to the supernatural, that, in the fulness of the time, the Perfect man, the God-man, should appear, so uniting the effluence to the Source of life that He could say, "I am in

the Father and the Father in Me"? This is the Christian apprehension of Christ, very God and very man, and our point is, that such an apprehension, when reverent, intelligent, and earnest, has in it a call to social endeavour which is supreme over the soul that hears.

So far this contention may be allowed. But again it is argued, "An idealisation of our earthly life, the cultivation of a high conception of what it may be made," a devotion to humanity in which the faith in Christ has no place, can be as efficacious as—nay, more efficacious for all that concerns material wellbeing than—any argument drawn from the idea of an Incarnation.[1] Now, it is not denied that the motive to much of the humanitarian effort of the day is not a distinctively Christian motive. One of the most striking features of society is, that many men and women realise the characteristic forces of religion, find a religion for themselves, in their idealisations, their art, their science, their work. They are frequently unselfish. They give themselves to their cause, and sometimes for it. They have faith, enthusiasm, hope. But let it be remembered that such persons are few, that they are unconsciously influenced by Christian atmospheres of thought,

[1] J. S. Mill, Essay on the Utility of Religion.

and that even they are in danger of having the range of their sympathies contracted by the specialities which engross them. The parts of their nature that are outwith the devotion —possibly the higher and more spiritual parts of the complex human being — are not summoned into activity. A scientific or an artistic interest, when it is wholly materialistic, must lack in a certain purity of idealism, a certain warmth and richness of colouring. Speaking generally, it may be reasserted that a vital belief in the truth of the Incarnate Lord supplies a reason for social endeavour which is both more intense and more quick and certain in its action than a merely vague idealisation of the earthly life can be. There are some words of Pater, in which he contrasts the pagan with the Christian charity, that express a truth as between non-Christian and Christian service of humanity. "What pagan charity," he writes, "was doing tardily, and as it were with the painful calculation of old age, the Church was doing almost without thinking about it, in the plenary masterfulness of youth, because it was her very being thus to do."[1] The spontaneity of labour signified in these sentences is a feature of really Christian labour. A man may, with no

[1] Marius the Epicurean, vol. ii. p. 127.

consciously religious motive, be zealous for the good of his world: one who really believes in Christ must be. If he is not, he is no true believer. It cannot with him be a matter of calculation; when the question as to how little or how much will suffice becomes prominent, he is parting from the vision of his Lord. His doing is not, or should not be, tardy doing. It is, or should be, prompt, easy, natural—the evidence of a love which glows with the sense of the great love of God. For, the Incarnation has revealed God, has penetrated life with the consciousness of God. It has consecrated earth. It has given a new grace to the material world, a new sanctity to man, in body, soul, and spirit. It has shed light on the individual, on the family, on the State. The religion of the Incarnation is the religion of humanity.

For, undoubtedly, in its representation of Christ as the Head of mankind, this religion has given a special form and force to the conception of the solidarity of the race. It has uplifted the sense of the partnership of each individual in the good common to the race, and has quickened proportionally the feeling of obligation to further that good. And in doing so it has emphasised the unspeakable value of the life and the world of man. This,

indeed, is the substance of the last of the objections to the Christian truth of the Incarnation to which allusion is now made. It is maintained that the notion of an intervention by Almighty God on behalf of man, besides being inconsistent with the everlasting continuities and the regularities of law, proceeds on assumptions as to man's place and the importance of his habitation which science has swept away. These assumptions, it is said, belong to ages when the universe in which men dwell was supposed to be the centre of creation, whereas now we know that it is only one, and a small one, in the immensity of universes, and that its tenant is not the final cause of creation. And knowing this—to imagine that the Eternal Supreme could be so interested in their concerns as to give His only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of men, is described as nothing better than the expression of human vanity. Now, to all such reasoning there can be no better answer than that contained in the parables of Christ, which set forth the will to seek and to save that which was lost.[1] Let it suffice, however, to rejoin that, assuming the entrance of sin into the world, it is not at variance with the scientific view of the unity of all worlds to suppose

[1] St Luke xv.

that a derangement in one sphere may be felt through all spheres (as the effect of an injury to any part of an organism is communicated to the entire organism), that all worlds may be bound together by a subtle and pervasive sympathy, and that, in the interest of all that is created, He who is the Father and Orderer of all may have undertaken to restore the pre-ordained harmony by reconciling that which had gone astray with this harmony and with Himself. But the objection taken only proves the assertion that, in the light of the Incarnation, an unspeakable value necessarily attaches to human life. What can a man give in exchange for a being which God, through a stupendous gift, has redeemed? "The glory of God is the living man; the life of man is the vision of God."[1] In this apprehension of the essential and inalienable worth of life there is the word of command: "Go, endeavour to make the living man to whom you minister the glory of God, to recover the vision of God in the lives that have lapsed. In even the depraved and sunken there is still some potentiality of good, something of the divine. Appeal to it. Remember that Christ saw it when He pierced 'all down the drear abyss of sin.' Search for

[1] Irenæus, quoted in Gore's Bampton Lecture, p. 121.

it. Look at your world with His eyes. Join yourselves to men in their burdens and woes; in His compassion and for His sake, work for the redemption of His kind and yours." Irenæus long ago interpreted a regulative truth of the Church's social mission when he wrote, "Christ was made what we are that He might enable us to be what He Himself is."[1]

The influence of a living faith in the Incarnation is strengthened by a twofold appeal which this faith makes.

1. It appeals to personal affection. In a striking passage in one of his Epistles, St Paul dwells on the κένωσις of Jesus, which he thus explains: "Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."[2] Christian thought vainly endeavours to give shape to all that this self-emptying implies. But this every one can discern—it refers to a sacrifice which words are inadequate to represent. God is love. Infinite love is the capacity of infinite sacrifice; and it is in Jesus Christ that the supreme expression

[1] Quoted in 'Lux Mundi,' p. 184. [2] Phil. ii. 6-8.

of this sacrifice is realised. What is borne in on us, as we follow Him from the mean cradle to the bitter cross, is that the Creator whose being, which is Love, is a law to Himself, owns, so to say, His responsibility for the world; and, under the spell of this revelation, the mind reasons, "If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."[1] The revelation is an irresistible command to love men, as Christ loved us.

"Christ has taught," observes Professor Seeley, "not merely by the Sermon on the Mount, but also by the agony and the crucifixion."[2] The teaching of the agony and the crucifixion is the one everlasting illustration of the ethic of Christ. But it is more: it is that which supplies the dynamic for the practical carrying out of the ethic. What we need is, not so much an exposition of righteousness as a power in the soul itself, persuading and enabling to be righteous. We may see the vision of God, as Balaam in the Old Testament narrative did, "with the eyes open," and yet, as in his case, lack the

[1] 1 John iv. 11.

[2] Ecce Homo, p. 110. "Those who fix their eyes on the Sermon on the Mount, or rather on the naked propositions which it contains, and disregard Christ's life, His cross, and His resurrection, commit the same mistake in studying Christianity that the student of Socratic philosophy would commit if he studied only the dramatic story of his [Socrates'] death."—P. 90.

will-power to be true to it—nay, all the while we may be hankering after "the wages of unrighteousness." An internal fire which, burning up the wood and hay and stubble of selfishness, effectually "propels generous emanations," is the desideratum. And it is this that is effected when, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the crucified Christ is glorified. Very emphatic is the language of the apostle, yet not more emphatic than the experience of a great cloud of witnesses has verified, "The love of Christ constraineth us" (hems us in, shuts us up to the one conclusion), "because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they who live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again."[1] This is the Christian ideal of the motive and end of the service of humanity; and, that they may receive an ever-fresh anointing, those who "thus judge" are always turning to the place called Calvary, there to be baptised into His death and to be consecrated in the truth of His Church's mission to the world over which He poured the blood of atonement.

2. Further, the faith in Christ, incarnate, crucified, but risen, to Whom all power in heaven and

[1] 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

in earth is given, contains an assurance which is the perennial nourishment of all that is strenuous and hopeful. The eye of the Church does not droop over the memory of a dead hero, or of a martyr who speaks only through the effect of His martyrdom. It turns, with a gaze always bright and ardent, to a living Lord, Brother, Friend. The confirmation of all that hope leaps forward to claim is its confidence that He is the true King and Leader of men. Even when wrong seems to triumph, this is the pledge, that whatsoever is right eternally is; that the wrong is only as the black cloud which, drifting athwart the firmament, temporarily obscures the azure beyond. There can be no pessimism where there is the stout heart of the preacher in East London, whom Matthew Arnold has sketched in one of his most beautiful sonnets—

> "Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene?'

So the poet asked, and the answer came—

> "Bravely, for I of late have been much filled
> With thoughts of Christ the living Bread."

The mind much filled with these thoughts calls sin sin, and sees in it an exceeding sinfulness. It beholds with tears the city in its woes and sorrows. But because its God is the God of

hope, because its Lord is the Christ Who was and is and is to come, because it believes in a kingdom of grace which is active in the midst of social confusions and upheavals, and, even by means of them, is working out larger and fuller measures of good, it can be patient in tribulation, nay, in the dark and cloudy day it cannot be otherwise than sanguine. Men protest that the harvest will not come, if it ever comes at all, until millenniums have passed. The Church, lifting up its eyes to the heaven where its Lord is, replies, "Lo, the fields are white already to harvest," and courageously it works and restfully it waits.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AGGRESSIVE SOCIAL ACTION OF THE CHURCH.

THOSE who are observant of the movement of great social forces in directions which they anxiously scrutinise, who feel the pressure of great problems the solution of which they are unable to discover, are apt to take an exaggerated view of the burdens and difficulties of their time. Now, for the encouragement of faith, it is good to cast the eye backward over the centuries during which the Church of Christ has been fulfilling the vocation of her Lord and Head. "History," it has been said, "is the chart and compass of national endeavour."[1] The history of the Church is the chart and compass of Christian endeavour. It indicates the paths along which, under the guidance of the Spirit of Truth, it has travelled and is called to travel. It tells us of the rocks and

[1] Friends in Council, p. 227.

reefs to be avoided, of the forces which have interrupted, and still interrupt, its legitimate progress. It brings us into relation to those master spirits of the ages who, by their inspiration and service, shaped the best action of their day, and it opens up to us the secret of the strength by which they "subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness." It proves to us that, though they may vary in form, the struggles we must face, the aims we must pursue, are, after all, the perennial struggles and aims of the higher life in Christ, in its conflict with the inferior purposes and ambitions of men. And thus, by all the testimony of the ages gone, we are encouraged to "take up the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."[1]

But, for two reasons, a retrospect of ecclesiastical history may repel rather than attract.

In the first place, the features most prominent in the retrospect are far from inviting. We might expect gardens of the Lord, watered everywhere, beautiful with flowers, fragrant with spices, and enriched with trees yielding all manner of fruit, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. Instead of this, we are

[1] Eph. vi. 13.

introduced to a succession of wide tracts swept bare by storms of passion, of arid wastes of controversy, of scenes in which priestcraft is beheld borrowing the carnal weapons of the most despicable statecraft, and creating atmospheres of wile, intrigue, and oppression. This is true. But let us bring the eyes of Christian wisdom and love to our study. Neander has rightly observed that "our understanding of the history of Christianity will depend on the conception we have formed in our own minds of Christianity itself."[1] If we have formed the conception of a society the law of whose development is, that the authority on which it must depend is a moral authority, that the truth with which it is charged can be unfolded only through frictions, through the cleavages caused by the sword which Christ announced that He had come to send, that the divine treasure, moreover, is deposited in earthen vessels, in weak and imperfect men; then, we shall not only cease to wonder at the battles whose stains and traces are evident in every generation, but we shall feel that these battles are full of pathos and interest, we shall see in them the resistances of the darkness which is always seeking to overtake the light, and the often slow, but ulti-

[1] Church History, Introduction.

mately sure, assertion of principles which modify the permanent conditions of life. We shall be reminded, too, that the real history of the Christian society is not that which is prominent in records. Writing of England, Ruskin protests, "That which people call her history is not hers at all, but of her kings and the tax-gatherers employed by them."[1] In a similar strain, we can affirm that the story told in books is often not the story of the *real* Church, but that of emperors and popes, of factions and councils. The story is to be looked for elsewhere. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."[2] It comes and it is advanced, through spiritual and social activities which scarcely appear, through all that enters into the making of Christian soul and community; through transformations of character, individual and national, effected by the diffusion of those educative, disciplinary, and ameliorative influences which tone and determine the civilisation of the world.

In the next place, the vastness of the undertaking may indispose us to any attempt to review the bygone centuries. The utter impossibility of even summarising social expansions which spread over such lengthened periods is at once

[1] Fors Clavigera, vol. i. p. 48. [2] St Luke xvii. 20.

recognised. And, in order that the supposed objection may be disarmed, the aim of this chapter shall be merely to illustrate, by rapid sketches, the unfolding of the Church's vocation, and its aggressive action on human society. Two epochs, for the sake of such illustration, are selected—the one, that which extends from the beginning of the organised Christian community to the peace of the Church, when Constantine yielded himself and his empire to the vision of the cross; and the other, that which, including the latter half of the middle ages, leads on to the Reformation of Western Christendom in the sixteenth century. These epochs are vast, but the survey, such as it is, will speak to us of the growth of that tiny seedling which, sown on the soil of Palestine, put out great branches, so that the birds of the heaven—the winged thoughts and aspirations of humanity—came and lodged under its shadow.

The day of Pentecost marks the beginning of the organised Christian brotherhood. On that day 3000 souls were added to the original band of disciples numbering 120, and the household of faith was formed. The converts, we are told, "continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching

and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."[1] In the glow of the love which knit all together, that which was individual to each member of the community was merged in the new corporate life. It required no ordinance to establish a scheme of reciprocal benefit and service. This was, almost unconsciously, the result of the union. No more beautiful picture of a community was ever drawn than that which is drawn in the simple words of the chronicler: "All that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And, day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they did take their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people."[2] It was the sign of the heaven which lay around the infancy of the Church. A vision, alas! too soon to fade, yet one in which Christianity may recognise a truth, not to be reproduced in the letter, but in its spirit, to "perish never."

Thus, in the feeling of its relation to the risen and exalted Christ, and by the guidance of the Spirit Whom he had promised, the Church developed a characteristic social collectivism.

[1] Acts ii. 42. [2] Acts ii. 44-46.

Some of the first things recorded concerning the Church had a distinctly social aspect. The first sin against its holiness was that in which two of those who had been added to it lied to the Holy Ghost, in regard to the surrender of their property.[1] The first discordant note in its music was a "murmuring" of certain Hellenists, "because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."[2] And the first action of the laity was the selection, in accordance with the counsel of the apostles, of "seven men of good report from among them, full of the Spirit and of wisdom,"[3] whom the apostles might appoint to the ministry of "the tables." A type of society had been originated which, claiming to be divine in its source and authority, "the fulness of Him who filleth all in all,"—"a tower," as Hermas, the Bunyan of the early time, called it, "founded on the word of the almighty and glorious Name, and kept together by the invisible power of the Lord,"[4]—joined all its constituents in the most intimate of social unities, in practical sympathies, whose impelling motive was, "the grace of their Lord Jesus Christ, in that, though He was rich, yet for their sakes He became poor."[5]

[1] Acts v. 1-11. [2] Acts vi. 1. [3] Acts vi. 2, 3.
[4] The Pastor of Hermas, Vision ii. chap. 3.
[5] 2 Cor. viii. 9.

"This second spring-tide of the world," writes Dean Church, "this fresh start of mankind in the career of their eventful destiny, was the beginning of many things, but what I observe now is that it was the beginning of new chances, new impulses, and new guarantees for civilised life, in the truest and worthiest sense of the words."[1] An organism which gave a "fresh start" in the world's history could not but be largely influenced by its environment. In order that it might push its own vitality outwards, it needed to receive from the surrounding soil: it could be robust, adaptive, human whilst spiritual, only by correspondence with elements which were akin to it, and by opposition to features which were alien to it, in the times on which it acted. Now, the environment with which, more and more, it realised a contact was the widespread Roman Empire. Its gradual disengagement from the Judaism under whose shadow it moved in its earliest morn is traced in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles. And the liberation, towards which much had led, was completed through the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus. The city where the Lord was crucified, and whence the faith in Him had gone forth on the mission for which He had destined it, became

[1] The Gifts of Civilisation.

a sacred memory, a holy place; but Christianity was thenceforth identified, not with Palestine, but with the world which acknowledged the sway of the imperial eagle.

The pioneer of its more catholic spirit and movement was the apostle Paul. To him, more than to any other of the apostles, was due the development of the Church in the first stadium of its course. The special theatre of his action was Asia Minor. He passed, at intervals, into Europe; but in this province the most striking imprints of his genius were made. He organised Christian communities in the larger centres of population. Each community, each church, had a certain local independence; but the feeling of relation to the larger unity was enforced in a practical manner. There were collections for poor saints in Jerusalem; he reckoned it a privilege to be the bearer of these collections. Deputations were, again and again, sent from church to church. The Epistles that St Paul addressed to one church, he asked should be forwarded to, and read in, other churches. The same social features—the brotherhood in Christ, the care of the weak, the poor, the widow, the orphan—were presented in every congregation. In his charge to the presbyters of Ephesus, there is an interesting reference to a saving of Jesus, not found in the Gospels,

which illustrates one of the main points of the apostle's teaching, "I gave you an example, how that so labouring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."[1]

Thus teaching, and diffusing a purer and loftier social spirit, St Paul made his memorable missionary circuits. The more the idea of the Church as a debtor for the Gospel of Christ to the whole world dominated his perception, the more did Rome and all the culture with which it was identified lay a spell on him. Greece, though subject to Rome, had, by means of its language and its literature, conquered Rome. And we see a noble blending of Greek thought with Roman imperialism in his conception of the social life of the Church, as that is presented in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.[2] Of this conception Dean Stanley has said: "It is not Asiatic but European. It was Greece, not India, which first presented the sight of a πόλις or State in which every citizen had his own political and social duties, and lived not for himself but for the State. It was a Roman fable, and not an Eastern parable, which gave to the world the image of a body politic, in

[1] Acts xx. 35. [2] 1 Cor. xii.

which the welfare of each member depended on the welfare of the rest. And it is precisely this thought which, whether in conscious or unconscious imitation, was suggested by the sight of the manifold and various gifts of the Christian community. His picture is the Christianisation not of the Levitical Hierarchy but of the Republic of Plato."[1] We can so far homologate this statement, for there are approximations in the ideal of the Christian apostle to that of the Greek philosopher, whilst at the same time it is suggestive of the Roman genius for government; but the apostle strikes a note which was not borne to him from either the Ægean Sea or the Tiber,—the note sounded in his wonderful poem on love,[2] and prolonged in the expression of his aim, "to make human society one living body closely joined in communion with Christ." With this aim becoming always more distinct, the march led by him was towards, was into, that world, covering "an area three thousand miles in length from east to west, and two thousand in breadth from north to south," which owned the sway of Rome.

The mighty and the wise little thought that he and the humble men who had caught "from his

[1] St Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, vol. i. pp. 270, 271.

[2] 1 Cor. xiii.

joyaunce a surprise of joy" were the bearers of a seed-basket, from whose contents, as they sowed "beside all waters," was to spring a new harvest for the earth. They little thought "of what was in store for civil and secular society as they beheld them plying their novel trade of preachers and missionaries."[1] At first they scarcely noticed the new teaching; if they noticed it at all, it seemed only a phase of Jewish fanaticism. But gradually, and not slowly, considering the obscurity in which it moved, it forced itself on notice. Its promulgation, and the hold it took on persons of all sorts and conditions, are among the problems of history.

It is a problem not now to be discussed. The causes, as from a merely human view-point, of the progress of Christianity in the early centuries, are related to climates of religious feeling or want of feeling, tendencies of thought, conditions of society, and other matters, whose consideration would take us too far afield. One point only may be noticed. Assuming that, beyond all secondary causes, *the* cause was the divine power which accompanied the Gospel, and appropriated the Church of Christ, there were facilities for the prosecution of the mission

[1] Gifts of Civilisation.

of the Gospel and the Church specially provided by the Empire and its circumstances. It was an all but universal Empire. It had realised a solidarity of government and of interests which favoured the conception of a universal Church, of a new solidarity of mankind. The time of its advance, moreover, was, as Professor Ramsay has indicated, a time of transition from the narrower conception of the Republic, according to which Rome was the mistress of subject nations, to the wider conception of the Empire, according to which nations were the constituents of a great confederation whose head was Rome.[1] And this wider view touched an answering chord in the Church: it nourished the presentiment of a spiritual-social vastness. Finally, the machinery of government; the universality of two languages, especially the Greek; the energies of commerce; the marches of armies and the voyages of fleets, making pathways by land and sea,—all contributed to the diffusion of Christian influence. In the words of Isaac Taylor, "The Gospel took to itself the wings of every energy which then carried men to and fro between the three continents. It used the roads and the ships of the Empire; it went in the track of caravans. It flowed, as one might say, through the arteries of

[1] The Church in the Roman Empire, p. 10.

the Greek language, philosophy, and literature; it went wherever books had gone before it; culture was a preparation of the soil for its reception. Forests and wilds it *did* penetrate by adventurous and precarious missions; but, along with the refinements of a high civilisation, it dwelt at home."[1]

So it was that, when the second century was running its course, the Roman magistrate awoke to the discovery that another empire, in the world but not of it, was, with weapons he could not understand, challenging the might of the Cæsars.

Why was the Church singled out for persecution? The policy of Rome was tolerant. Why was its faith branded as a *superstitio prava* and condemned as a *religio illicita?* There is a well-known testimony as to the character and aims of the Christian society which takes back to the year A.D. 120. Pliny, the governor of Bithynia, sent a report to the Emperor Trajan, that not only bears an impartial witness to the growth of Christianity in his province, but also supplies a most interesting glimpse into the social life of the Christian community.[2] His is a testimony very different from that of the historian Tacitus, who represents Christians as only hateful for their crimes and deserving punishment of hitherto un-

[1] Restoration of Belief, p. 5. [2] Letters to Trajan, 96, 97.

exampled severity. But why does the mild and sagacious Trajan — with the information of his proconsul Pliny before him, to the effect that all he could find, after investigation, was that Christians were wont to meet together and sing hymns of praise to Christ, and covenant to be chaste and honest—yet sanction the infliction of punishment on these unoffending people, when they were apprehended and would not recant?

The answer is that, with an instinct which was quite correct, Roman statesmen discerned in the spread of Christianity a menace to the existing structure of society. Other religions were content to move in their own orbit: they might nurse fanaticisms, but any outbreak which disturbed the peace could be repressed, and they had no particularly aggressive character. But the Christian religion was inevitably aggressive. It did not, indeed, interfere with political relations. It inculcated the payment of "tribute to whom tribute was due." It had no quarrel with the Empire; nevertheless, the Empire was bound to quarrel with it. It was not only that the crafts which depended on sacrificial rites and temple worship were imperilled; it was not only that the *ceremoniæ Romanæ*—which, though little of a living faith attached to them, struck their roots far down into national and social

life—were more and more neglected; it was not only that Christians stood aloof from the bloody shows and cruel sports which were necessary for the diversion of the public mind, more particularly of the masses, from degradations that were eating into the core of the body politic; the danger of dangers was that, in this growing belief, there was an ethical and moral standard which collided with the standards of Roman citizenship. The benevolent aspects of the Christian fraternity might have been passed over, as denoting a harmless enthusiasm; but the obligations of the faith in its Sacred Person which it professed were another matter. They imposed on its members an authority supreme over that of the Cæsar; they asserted the inviolable sacredness of conscience—not as measured by the conventions of the State, but as measured by the royal law of the Christ Who was worshipped. As between the State and this Christ, there was for Christians no choice. It was this moral sense that uplifted the individual man; and, in the uplifting of the individual man, the knell of the slavery which was regarded as essential to society was sounded. And thus, to those who looked on the Religion simply from the Roman standpoint, simply with reference to the interests of the State, and the

cohesion of society on the Roman basis, the toleration of it was impossible. As early as the year 64, Nero, the miserable buffoon who wore the purple of the Cæsars, varied the accusation of incendiarism by that of an *odium humani generis*.[1] He endeavoured to stir the popular feeling against Christians by representing them as hostile to civilised life. And between the civilised life, as then organised, and the Christian life, there was a necessary and a radical hostility. In the measure of the Church's expansion that hostility was declared.[2] It was precipitated and developed by persecution. A new religious symbol of imperial unity had been invented; that symbol was the worship of the emperor. When the Christian was commanded to do homage to the deified Cæsar he refused, and, on account of his refusal, he was thrown to the lions or burned at the stake. Emperors learned what others than they have been taught —even the Church itself in later and corrupt

[1] "To the Roman *genus humanum* meant not mankind in general, but the Roman world, men who lived according to Roman manners and laws—the rest were enemies and barbarians."—The Church in the Roman Empire, p. 236.

[2] The attitude of the humane Aurelius is the most distinct of testimonies to the exact nature of the case. His persecution of Christians was contrary to the inclination of his mind: it was directed entirely by the political motives of a Roman statesman.

times — that in the blood or in the ashes of martyrs there is seed.

But now let us overlook all the fierce fight of affliction through which the Church was called to pass. Let us place ourselves at the beginning of the fourth Christian century, at the year 317, when the Edict of Constantine proclaimed the age of persecution past, and the reign of peace between Church and State begun. What then was the position of the Church? and what had it done for human society?

It had covered the entire area of the Roman Empire and penetrated beyond it.[1] In every city it had congregations, in some it had even a majority of the citizens. From the cities it had spread into the adjacent country, planting churches everywhere. It had carried its message to Gaul, to Britain, to Spain, to the forests of Swabia and Germany. It had made Asia Minor largely its own. Egypt, proconsular Africa, Numidia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, had Christian communities. It had crossed the Euphrates. It had travelled to Parthia, Persia, Arabia, India, and as far as China. Its line had gone through the earth. Barbarians—the barbarous tribes on the frontier of the Empire—had been taught to

[1] The social influence of the Church is traced in the present writer's 'Expansion of the Christian Life,' pp. 31-66.

bow in the name of Jesus. Where man was, the Church had felt itself bound to be. It had taught slaves, but it had gained the free and high-born also.[1] Its philosophers and apologists were second to none for learning and force. It was a vast and world-wide power. The number of its professed adherents is not the criterion of its influence. Perhaps, not a twentieth, not more than a tenth certainly, of the population of the Empire was Christian, when Constantine saw and accepted the cross. But the proportion of Christians, whatever it was, represented the moral earnestness, the vital and progressive force, of the Empire. And the social life which surrounded it had in many respects been struck, as with a wedge driven near to its base.

In all parts of the world, substantially the same type of social life was reproduced. In respect of polity, there were the bishops or overseers, the officers of various kinds, the administrations and administrators of the brotherhood. In respect of aims, it might be an exaggeration to affirm that the idea of a community held bound in its solidarity for all its constituents, especially for the sick

[1] "The Christian religion spread at first among the educated more rapidly than among the uneducated, and nowhere had it a stronger hold (as Mommsen observes) than in the household and at the court of the Emperor."—The Church in the Roman Empire, p. 56.

and the poor, was a distinctively Christian idea; for anticipations of it are to be found in Greek writers, and the *alimentations* of the Roman Empire grew to be a burden too heavy for the imperial exchequer. But there were features that dissociated the Church from all such *alimentations*. The policy that promoted them had respect to the maintenance of order and the suppression of revolution. It meant the demoralisation of the people. In the Church there was found a unity inspired by an utterly different spirit and motive. It interpreted a covenant of sympathy. The sanctuaries of Christians had orphanages or institutions of healing attached to them. We read of provision for widows, and children bereft of parents, of hospices, of hospitals for lepers, of benevolences of many kinds, of practical philanthropies which moderated the excitements of controversy, and were, to all without, a sign of brotherly love. And, in our contemplation of the earlier Church, we must not overlook the ethical and spiritual ideal which it ever kept in view. If Christians were held bound to love one another, it was for the sake of Him who had given them His cross to bear and had called them to be holy even as He is holy.

This society, mirroring, amidst all its imper-

fections, a lofty ideal of purified humanity, reached many sides of the surrounding life. Even the heathenism which opposed it was influenced by it.[1] It tended to form atmospheres of thought and feeling in which the inhumaneness and ghastliness of some of the features of this heathenism were evidenced. A public opinion condemnatory of infanticide, of exposure of children, of the cruelties of many kinds with which the records of the centuries are filled, had been formed and was rapidly spreading. Bloody spectacles, gladiatorial exhibitions, the brutal sports offered to prince and slave, were discountenanced by the diffusion of a gentler type of manners. A higher value was being put on human life, and a new ethic was silently salting the earth.

[1] "One of the most interesting facts in the history of religion under the Empire is the influence which was exerted by the new religion on the old, and the progress of discovery is gathering a store of information on this point which will at some future time make a remarkable picture."—The Church in the Roman Empire, p. 144.

CHAPTER V.

THE AGGRESSIVE SOCIAL ACTION OF THE CHURCH—*continued.*

A NEW era dawned on both the Church and the Empire, bringing with it new social conditions, when the Roman Cæsar, the founder of Constantinople, recognised Christianity as the religion of the State. We have no occasion to discuss the character, and the policy, imperial and ecclesiastical, of Constantine. The story of the six centuries which followed the peace that he proclaimed is eventful and troubled. But it is outwith the limits of our review to do more than glance at these periods of storm and stress, of dissolution and reconstruction. The object aimed at in this chapter is merely an illustration of the aggressive action of the Church on the social life of humanity. And we revert to the times between the fourth and the tenth century on whose threshold we take our stand, only in so

far as they shed light on the Christian civilisation which from this vantage-ground we survey, tracing thence some features of the bent given to public sentiment and life, prior to that mighty moral upheaval which has made the sixteenth century one of the outstanding epochs in the world's history.

I.

What was the religious and social position of the world and the Church at the beginning of the tenth century? To understand this, we must glance at the periods anterior to it, especially at those usually designated "The Dark Ages."

From the day of Constantine's peace, with the exception of a brief period, the Roman Empire was a Christian Power, and the beneficent effect of the change was marked in the spirit of legislation. The Code and Institutes of Justinian are the sign of the immense advance which had been made in the policy, and, indeed, in the whole conception, of government.[1] A new consciousness of the worth of life, of the rights of the individual, of the honour due to woman, of

[1] "The grand legacy of Roman law as reformed by Christian ideas."

the duty of protecting the weak, and of promoting public morality, had been developed. The Church had given the State new social ideals, and had created a higher platform of citizenship. "Christianity," says Mommsen, "was the friend, not the enemy, of the Empire."[1] The Empire became stronger when the emperors became Christian. It contained in it the seeds of disruption, but the germination of these seeds was delayed by the power of religion. Faith in God was a more potent bond of cohesion than the deification of the emperor. And Christian worship, disciplines, and benevolences, softened manners, and, to some extent, improved morals. The State gained; it may be that the Church lost. If the former received a deeper force from the latter, possibly the latter appropriated too much from the former. There were better emperors; there may have been worse bishops. Though the Church christened, it failed to regenerate, the Empire.

We observe with interest the influence of the missionary efforts of the Church in a direction which was destined to affect the Empire. The Gospel had penetrated at an early date into the regions which were inhabited by hordes of barbarians, who hung like a dark cloud on the

[1] Quoted in Ramsay's 'Church in the Roman Empire,' p. 193.

frontier of the Roman State. It found its way into these regions through Christian captives. A bishop of the Goths attended the Council of Nicæa. In 341 Ulphilas was consecrated to labour among them. A sermon of Chrysostom, preached in 398, pointed to Goths, one of whom had addressed the congregation, as "the most savage race of men, but standing there together with the lambs of the Church."[1] Mission bands had travelled through the forests of Germany and introduced a civilisation concerning which it has been said that "if modern life has not decayed like ancient, and pure family life still supplies fresh forces to races a thousand years old, this is due above all to the teachings of Christ acting on German barbaric virtue."[2] Now the fruit of all this labour, as regarded from a social view-point, was apparent when Goth and Hun and Teuton found their opportunity in the condition of Rome — its aristocracy enervated by luxury, its population burdened by taxation, and a vast proportion of it sunk in slavery. The northern armies swept through the sunny plains of Italy and ravaged the Eternal City. But a double spell laid its arrest on them. They were awed by the indefinable sense of the majesty of

[1] Neander's Church History, vol. iii. p. 182.

[2] Gesta Christi, p. 119.

Rome, as that was evidenced to them in the splendour of its buildings, and the tokens of an opulence of life which contrasted with the rude simplicity of their Fatherlands. They were impressed still more by the Christian sanctuaries; and the obligations of the august name which they had been taught to adore disposed them to moderation, to respect women and children, and to recognise the sanctity of the places of Christian worship. No temple or church was desecrated, and none who claimed the protection of the Church were injured.

Associated as the Church was with the Empire, the lines of its development, as an organised social force, were to some extent parallel to those of the Empire. As the latter power had absorbed nationalities and welded differences of race and government into a vast, though not entirely homogeneous, unity, so the Church gradually reduced ancient local independences, crushed out diversities which seemed to menace the solidarity of the system, and stiffened rule and ritual into hard uniformities. The arrangements of the Empire were largely adopted by the Church. The provinces, with their proconsuls or procurators, were frequently accepted as dioceses whose chief officers were the bishops. In Roman administration, above the proconsuls, there were

dignitaries of patrician rank, the copestone of the political edifice being the emperor. Similarly in the Church, above the bishops there were archbishops, metropolitans, patriarchs, the supreme elevation being, after a time, accorded to the Bishop of Rome. His claims were supported by the prestige of the great city, by the sacredness which was attached to the chair of St Peter, by the need of a head in the complexity of interests which the advances of the Church caused, and, it must be added, by unblushing mendacities.[1] When, in 476, the boy, Romulus Augustus, was compelled to resign the shadow of Roman sovereignty, the way was cleared for the indisputable supremacy of the Roman See. The bishop now took the place of the heathen Pontifex Maximus. The emperor used to provide alimentations for the poor, the bishop henceforth did so. For three centuries, the see "sat as the ghost of the deceased Empire crowned on the grave thereof."

Thus the Papacy assumed the most prominent place in the organisation of the Church. But, in occupying the standpoint which the beginning of

[1] *E.g.*, the forgery of the Donation of Constantine, "whereby it was pretended that power over Italy and the West had been granted by the first Christian emperor to Pope Sylvester and his successors in the chair of St Peter."—The Holy Roman Empire, p. 40.

the tenth century presents, we are reminded of great developments, great struggles that synchronised with this gradual assumption, and that impressed themselves on the political and religious condition of Europe. The Frankish-Roman Empire had waxed and had waned. It originated in the felt necessity of a strong arm to protect the Church and Italy from external pressures and from internal dissensions. Pepin, son of Charles Martel, was, in 754, invested with the purple of patrician of the Romans—"the first of a long line of Teutonic kings who were to find the love of Rome more deadly than her hate." The mystic medieval Roman Empire was fully inaugurated when Charles, Pepin's son, better known as Charlemagne, kneeling before the altar of St Peter's, received from the Pope the crown of the Cæsars.

There is no occasion to follow the course of events, as that was shaped by this attempt to unite Western Christendom. Charlemagne, *magnus et orthodoxus Imperator*, bequeathed a diadem which sat uneasily on the brow of his successors, and the benefits of which, to the nations of the West, were more than doubtful. "The epoch of the Carlovingian dynasty," says Mr Hallam, "was the worst that Europe has ever known, and the social misery of that epoch extended into

generations following."[1] It is more relevant to our present purpose to note the determination of the Church's policy which coincides with this epoch.

In the earlier part of the new *régime*, the theory was that the spiritual and the temporal monarchies were co-ordinate, the spiritual ruling the souls, the temporal the bodies, of men. But, on the principle that the soul is superior to the body, the Church, at a later date, asserted a sovereignty superior to that of the emperor—an assertion which reached its climax in the pontificate of Hildebrand (Gregory VII.) The theory no longer was the union of Church and State, but the ascendancy of the Church over the State. The first duty of the State was to serve the Church by repressing schism, by making the judgments and acts of the Pope effectual, and by rendering obedience in all things; and the artillery by which the Church enforced its behests consisted in the terrors of excommunication and the release of subjects from allegiance to their rulers. An ecclesiastical despotism

[1] The State of Europe during the Middle Ages, p. 23. It is right, however, to say that it was the Church that, even in the dark ages, kept learning alive, and that rendered possible the institution of the schools of Charlemagne (under Alcuin of York), and thus secured to some extent both a learned clergy and an educated laity.

that reached its height between the tenth and the twelfth centuries is the most prominent feature in the external estate of the Church.

II.

Surveying the scene, then, as it is presented in the ages loosely called the Middle Ages, the situation is briefly this: The fusion of nations has resulted in confusion, which there is no power strong enough to remedy. Not the old Empire, whose seat had been transferred to the Bosphorus, for it was too weak even to control its centre. Not the Holy Roman Empire, which was parting from its mystical ideal. The ancient barbarian unities had been shaken, but they had not been replaced by a higher unity. New combinations were called for, but the answer to the call was slow to come. The old had died, but it had died hard; the new had a difficult birth, and a still more difficult growth. And the Church, which should have been the unifying force, shared in the general corruption. Outwardly, it was a magnificent and compacted system. And in the interests of civilisation this was good. Whatever of gentleness, of culture, of higher life, was in these ages—and there was much—was shielded from violence by it, and was

nourished within it. But it failed to educate a pure public morality, as it should have done; and this for two reasons. First, in borrowing the clothes of the Empire, it exchanged the imperialism of truth for that of worldly power. And second, in assimilating to its discipline fragments of the paganisms which it conquered, it appropriated not only things picturesque, venerable through association with national histories, and in themselves harmless, but other elements that were foreign to the simplicity in Christ and that bred superstitions. In respect of its action on the deeper life of man, all that was great and powerful in it issued from the elect spirits — the saints, missionaries, and learned theologians and doctors like Aquinas — who, with a few exceptions, had no share in the guidance of its outward policies. On the occasion of a papal jubilee heaps of silver and gold were borne into the treasury of St Peter. The Pope said to Thomas Aquinas, "Peter could not say now, 'Silver and gold have I none.'" "No," replied Thomas; "No, your Blessedness, nor could he say now, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.'"[1]

These middle ages were full of contradictions.

[1] Gore, The Mission of the Church, p. 169.

We call them dark; and so, in some respects, they were: but in them universities were founded, many lamps were kindled by fire from Rome, if not from heaven, and schoolmen and scholars, whose pedantries must not render us forgetful of their wonderful learning, traversed the Continent propounding theses, holding disputations, laboriously writing treatises.[1] We think of them as disordered; and so they were: but in them cathedrals, and abbeys, and churches, were reared whose architecture is the admiration of our day. We look on them as lacking in moral cohesion and social organisation; and so they were: but their guilds and fraternities, though impossible in later periods, regulated trades, established relations of protection and sympathy between employers and employed, and were surrounded by things beautiful and picturesque. We speak of them as rough and rude; and so they were: but the reverence for gentleness and humility was widely spread, woman was elevated, the care of the orphan and

[1] Between the tenth and the twelfth centuries there was a gradual awakenment of intellect. To this the Crusades, and, towards the close of the time, the rediscovery of the whole writings of Aristotle, contributed. From the thirteenth century to the Renaissance the scholastic philosophy dominated. The doctors were supreme. The decline of scholasticism developed a spirit of freedom, and thus prepared the way for the Reformation.

the widow was secured by the *noblesse oblige* of chivalry. A spiritual, poetical element was infused into social life, and showed itself frequently in unexpected ways. They were heroic ages, on whose canvas are thrown the figures of mighty men, men of renown. They were ages of enthusiasm, as the Crusades abundantly testify. They were ages of faith. They were ages of art. In respect of social condition, though the mass of the people was exploited, mankind was slowly moving towards emancipations. From the tenth century, the manumission of serfs became ever more frequent, "the principal cause," writes an old chronicler, "being piety and love towards God." One of the Mendicant Orders established in the thirteenth century—the Franciscan—had for its object the tending of the poor.

Regarding the social fabric in general, the most characteristic feature of the centuries we are reviewing was the system of Feudalism. Possibly, the root of this system was the Roman conception of the *patronus*. Be this as it may, under the Frankish-Roman Empire, it spread and dominated over Europe, gradually displacing older German organisations and other codes. In the first instance, feudalism was not so much a political as a social development.

In times when the executive was too weak to make the State in its unity powerful in all districts and over all elements of the nationality, it was a rough-and-ready way of ensuring a kind of order, a semblance at least of protection based on the principle of reciprocal service. From the ninth until the fourteenth century, it grew and prevailed; and in its growth it assumed such proportions, and ramified in so many directions, that a description of it is impossible. Let it suffice to say that the soil of the country was held on the two conditions — that the owner was responsible for the people resident on or cultivating the soil, they, on the other hand, being bound to follow his lead in war, and to render obedience to him as their lord; and, further, that the lord or owner was under obligation to give a like obedience to his suzerain, who, in his turn, extended authority and protection to him. Over all suzerains or superiors was the sovereign—the supreme and paramount lord, the pulse of the machine, to whose call the feudal chiefs, in every degree, were under covenant to respond. Thus, as the years passed, there arose territorial aristocracies and squirearchies, with many gradations, each grade reproducing the essential idea of the system, and forming a ruling class so widely spread that a

kingdom represented an indefinite number of small kingships, the monarch being, not so much the one king and judge, as the head of all the petty sovereignties, he their chief and they his vassals. It is easy to see what scope for the exercise of both virtues and vices such a state of matters allowed. The good despot could do much for those under his care, though, if he were in the inferior ranks, his efforts might be neutralised by the action of those above him. The ambitious and unscrupulous kept vassals and serfs alike in a thraldom which cut off all occasions and even desires of social or material improvement. The institution, as a whole, prevented social life from "making increase to the edifying of itself in love." Justice was a baron's affair. The uses and wonts of a rougher and earlier day had disappeared. The superior of a domain had or took jurisdiction in it, even to the extent of inflicting capital punishment. It was not until the middle of the fourteenth century that the majesty of imperial law asserted itself.

The Church fulfilled a mission of benevolence to those whom feudality oppressed. It was so far under the yoke, for its prelates and abbots were feudal lords. But its influence was, on the whole and vigorously, on the side of the villeins or serfs.

In the estates which were held as its patrimonies or baronies, the conditions of tenure were more favourable to liberty and enterprise than in the estates of barons or lairds obliged to do military service. The bishop's riggs, or the abbey lands, often presented a marked contrast to the riggs and lands of the lay neighbours. In more direct ways, however, Christianity interposed. The condition of the *Theous* or serfs was deplorable. They were fixed to the soil so that they could not remove from it. They were the absolute property of their master. "They were not reckoned among the people." The Church protested and laboured against this servitude. "That Christians should be removed from it," the Council of Chalons in the middle of the seventh century declared to be "the demand of the highest pity and religion."[1] A historian of the middle ages asserts, as has already been noticed, that *pietas et caritas ergo Deum* was the more frequent cause of the liberation of serfs; and the forms of manumission witness to the penetration of society by a Christian spirit. The Crusades aided the movement. They realised the ideal of a Christian commonwealth in which high and low were equally sharers. The enthusiasm which they inspired tended to break down the barriers between class and class.

[1] Gesta Christi, p. 128.

Feudal chiefs, before joining in the crusade, released their slaves. How far Christian sentiment operated in diffusing the sentiments of humanity is evidenced in a proclamation of the Emperor Sigismund towards the middle of the fifteenth century. "It is an unheard-of thing," so runs the proclamation, "that in the holy Christianity one should be so proud as to say to a man, 'Thou art mine.' He is against Christ, and all the commandments of God are lost on him."

In the Latin Church (as distinguished from the Eastern), the most characteristic trend of the mediæval period was the expansion, followed by the decadence, of monachism. In this we recognise a spirit and a habit which were imported into the Church. Palestinian Essenism left its mark on some of Christ's disciples. But, ages before the day of Christ, the ascetic spirit was prevalent in the East. It came into Christianity, and it came to stay. It was fostered by the antagonism, which pious souls keenly felt, of a world that seemed to them to be lying in the wicked one. The cliffs and sandhills of Syria and Egypt were perforated by the cells of eremites, endeavouring, in solitary contemplation, to realise the peace for which they sought in vain in the haunts of men. And since man, even when ascetic, is a social animal, companies of Christians flying from

the world, and giving themselves wholly to God, were formed. Before the thirteenth century there were many orders of monks, including the order of St Benedict with all its branches. From the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, the Dominicans, with their subdivisions, were organised. Time would fail for even the most cursory account of the spread of the conventual system. The monastery and the convent were everywhere in evidence. They were regarded with special favour. Charlemagne called abbots the chivalry of his empire. Lands and gifts were lavishly bestowed on them. In the earlier half of the middle ages, all that was most devoted in the ranks of ecclesiastics was connected with them. The regular clergy—that is, the clergy under conventual rule—were, taken as a whole, superior in learning, zeal, and piety to the secular or parochial clergy.

Justice compels us to acknowledge the debt of Christian civilisation to the religious orders. The monastery was not merely a refuge for the indolent or the feeble or those who were weary of life. It was much more: it was a home for those who, under conditions of society that were unfavourable to the cultivation of piety, sought in it that opportunity of living religiously which they desired. It was, as the ministry of the Church through all the centuries was, an equal-

ising institution. All classes from the highest to the lowest found a place in the orders of St Benedict or St Dominic. The Regulars were the intermediaries between the rich and the poor. "The friendship of the poor," says St Bernard, "constitutes us the friends of kings, but the love of poverty makes kings of us."[1] If we ask, Who were the erudite men of the time? we find that a large majority, including Aquinas, Duns Scotus, &c., was composed of monks. The preachers, some of them mighty in eloquence, were monks. The great missionaries were monks. From the orders of Benedictines came those who laid the foundations of the Christian society in England, Germany, and Belgium. In days of fierce warfare and bloody feuds, the Regulars promoted the truces and peaces of God. They were friends of the people in their revolts from oppression: the monks of Cluny, for instance, rose against the abuses of feudalism. They were the engineers, the architects, the farmers, the builders of their generations. They undertook journeys through Europe, preaching Christian brotherhood in many lands. Even when the first love was lost, when wealth on the one hand and superstition on the other caused "the white to grow

[1] The Monks of the West, vol. i. p. 54.

murky," there were those of them of whom the world was not worthy, those to whom the word written concerning Benedict might be applied, "*Ipse Fundator placidæ quietis.*" [1]

But—to quote the words of Count Montalembert, the panegyrist of the monks of the West—"there came a time when the abuse of monachism overpowered the law, when the exception eclipsed the rule," when "life ebbed away from the monastic foundations, not religious life only, but life of every kind." [2] Dante represents St Benedict himself as saying to the poet, who craves to look on his form "by no covering veiled"—

> "My rule
> Is left a profitless stain upon the leaves;
> The walls for abbey reared turned into dens;
> The cowls to sacks choked up with musty meal.
> Foul usury doth not more lift itself
> Against God's pleasure than that fruit which makes
> The hearts of monks so wanton." [3]

The champions of monachism say that the houses should have been reformed and the orders reconstituted. But the reformer who had power to give effect to his plan did not appear. Instead of him was heard the sterner voice, "Cut down, why cumber they the ground?" "When," exclaimed Bossuet, "a religious order becomes

[1] The Monks of the West, vol. i. p. 87. [2] Ibid., pp. 132, 142.
[3] Paradiso, Canto 22.

inferior, it is no longer anything but a spiritual corpse and its own living tomb."[1] As the era of Reformation dawned, the conventual fellowships were proved to be spiritual corpses, tombs, not nurseries, of life. And thus it fares with all attempts of men "to wind themselves too high for mortal man beneath the sky." The social life which Christianity takes to its heart is a robust and hardy plant that needs the fresh free air of heaven, and the regulation, not the suppression, of the affections implanted in the heart. We feel that the swift witness against monachism was both stern and just, whilst at the same time we recognise that "if we follow the furrows which monastery and order have dug in history we shall find everywhere the traces of their beneficence."[2]

The decline of the papacy may be dated from the fourteenth century. Its authority was weakened by flagrant scandals, by the removal of the papal court to Avignon and the residence of popes there for several decades, by the election of rival popes, the nominees of rival empires, and by the general deterioration of morals among the clergy. Other influences were also active. Europe was beginning to awake from a long and deep intellectual

[1] The Monks of the West, vol. i. p. 149. [2] Ibid., p. 163.

slumber. Classical learning revived. Individual minds were stirred. Preachers, keenly perceptive of the evils of their time, waxed bold. Associations, inspired by a more free and evangelical spirit than that of the orders, were originated, and their influence spread. As the fifteenth century advanced, the signs of a coming day of the Lord became more and more clear. That day came in the sixteenth century.

But here we approach the border-land of modern history, and this marks the limit of the present survey.

Our object has been to indicate some of the principles, features, and issues, of the aggressive action of the Church, as an institution with a definite social character and mission. We have followed its onward way through the storms which beset it in earlier days, and the confusions which resulted from the decline and the ultimate disruption of the great Roman Empire. We have seen it gathering nations under its wings, and planting civilisations in the lands of Europe and beyond. The dark shadows on its history it is easy to trace; but these must not be so projected as to thrust out of sight the social benefits which were wrought. It is no exaggeration to affirm that, but for the Church and municipal government, Italy would have

been wrecked, and Europe would have presented the spectacle of a multitude of states more or less barbarous, everlastingly at feud, and without any bond of unity. If the Church could not curb the ambitions of princes and the feuds of nobles, if, too often, in its policy it played the part of a power more wily than any world-power, yet, in the labours and services of its clergy, its missionaries, its fraternities, it vindicated the cause of the weak and asserted the rights of the something that is in all men—the rights of humanity. By its communications, by the communions between peoples which it established, by the witness which it bore to a good of which all nations were partakers, it realised in dim outline "a parliament of man, a federation of the world." Why it did not more rapidly and surely Christianise the continent which owned its sway, is a question the reply to which is manifold. But it brought in large measures of good, and it prepared for still larger measures in future times. It gave ideals of virtue, freedom, love. It infused the spirit of reverence into the civilisation it guided. It opened up idealisations of life that checked the scramble for mere material and territorial gain, that softened the coarseness of manners, that inculcated the dignity of womanhood, that pro-

claimed the sanctity of the home, that enjoined the duty of the strong to support the weak. The tares indeed grew in rank luxuriance, threatening often to choke the wheat, but the wheat remained—pure grain and wholesome—in the midst of manifold corruption.

CHAPTER VI.

NATIONAL CHURCHES AND THEIR SOCIAL WORK.

Looking beyond the limits of Palestine, and far away into "dim and distant courses" of the future, our Lord contemplated other sheep than those of the Jewish fold, whom to bring, He declared, was the necessity of His mission, in order that, hearing His voice, they might be made partakers of His grace, and in their several folds—*i.e.*, the varieties of their estate—might be comprehended in one world-wide and world-without-end flock, under the guidance of Himself, the one universal Shepherd.[1] The ideal of the Christian brotherhood which He thus presents is a catholicity which allows ample scope for diversities. St Paul gives another form to the conception of his Master when he says that in the new humanity which Christians "put on," "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, free-

[1] St John x. 16.

man, but Christ is all and in all." The point of his assertion is, not that the distinctions which he indicates are obliterated, but that, in the large and charitable air of Christianity, they are no longer causes of separation; they are only as the differing tones which blend in noble music, the discords which they once denoted having been quenched by the "meeting harmonies" of the Gospel, which has made peace between Jew and Gentile, and revealed the Christ of God as the Redeemer and Head of mankind. For there are affinities of race and blood, rooted in the nature of things, that link peoples together in special intimacies, forming climates of thought and feeling by which all are subtly affected. To ignore these affinities, is impossible; to make room for them, permeating them at the same time by the Spirit of the Lord, and subordinating them to the accomplishment of the ends common to the whole Christian society, is the secret of a truly catholic community. The vision of the Church triumphant that thrilled the heart of St John was that of "a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb."[1] National, tribal, language, variations are recognised; but

[1] Revelation vii. 9.

they are the elements of the eternal unity, the notes that are harmonised in the great voice of praise, "Unto our God Who sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb."

In the fluid period of the Church's history, there was no difficulty in combining national and tribal diversities with the idea of the one Church. For the unity then was spiritual rather than ecclesiastical. There was the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."[1] It was enough that those who believed were baptised into Christ and remained steadfast in the "apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers."[2] They formed companies, separated, by their faith and worship, from many of the religious observances and social customs of the civic societies that constituted their environment, yet otherwise maintaining the relations of citizenship towards these societies. But, as the ages progressed, complications ensued. The government of the Church, as we have seen, was gradually consolidated on lines in many respects parallel to those of the Empire. From the ninth century, when the supremacy of the Roman See was complete, the tendency was in the direction of a uniformity of rule and ritual with which local

[1] Ephesians iv. 5, 6. [2] Acts ii. 42.

and national differences were apt to collide. By its insistence on religious unity, Christianity had always opposed Polytheism, with its many gods and many rites, but, in the earlier days, elasticities, in the details of discipline, were not regarded as inconsistent with the truth of an essentially spiritual unity. In proportion as the government of the Church became oligarchical, and finally monarchical, these elasticities were discountenanced as incompatible with the solidarity of the ecclesiastical system.

Along with this Church development, we observe a change in the plan of the Church's aggressive campaign. The more primitive Christianity aimed at the conversion of individual souls. The working of the faith was often from the base upwards. "God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong."[1] But, in later missions, the object was to reach the head of the tribe or nation, to secure his adhesion, and then through him to win the people to the adoption of the new way. And two consequences resulted. The one, that ancient customs remained, with at least a certain potency, in the nominally Christian community. The policy of the Church

[1] 1 Corinthians i. 27.

was, not to tear up the social organism by the roots, but to reconsecrate customs that were venerated, transferring them to Christian observances, and thus ingrafting much of the old order into the new. The traditions of the nation were allowed some room in the adopted religion. And the other consequence was, that peoples, as such, maintained their integrity, and imparted a savour of their nationality to the forms of their worship. Although in the essentials of the truth and in the deference paid to the Supreme Pontiff there was a substantial consensus, differences in usage, in that nameless force which we may call national temper, in tones of thought and view, were in many ways made evident. The Church was outwardly one, but, like Joseph's coat, it had many colours.

Accordingly, frictions which it required all the diplomacy of curias and legates to adjust, which sometimes involved the exercise of the terrors of the Church, were of frequent occurrence. One occasion of strife was not adjusted: the result of the feud was the great schism between the East and the West; and the groups of churches which adhered to the East and its custom were, and to this day are, mirrors of the mind of the peoples they represent—a mind stationary, even stagnant, rigid as the dead man's hand which is laid on the

Patriarch of one of the Oriental Communions at his consecration. But, in Western Christendom, questions affecting national use and wont, institutions into sees and benefices, the rights of sovereigns, the imposition of Papal tributes, and so forth, were constant matters of dispute. The terrible power of excommunication exercised by the Church—laying sovereigns or their peoples, or both, under ban and curse—is an evidence at once of the despotism of Rome, and of the writhing of nationalities under it.

Selecting as a special instance that which most nearly concerns us, let us trace historically the assertion of the national spirit in, or against, the Church in the British Isles.

That assertion was more marked in these isles than in Continental countries. Their isolation, and the character and genius of their peoples, accounted for this. Moreover, England was not so firmly riveted to the feudal system as they had been. For, William of Normandy, in conquering it, modified that system, and brought the Crown into more direct contact with the life of the nation than was realised in Teutonic feudalism, or had been realised in the Saxon period.

The law of England, indeed, was unchallenged by Rome for five centuries after Augustine landed in Thanet, A.D. 596. No appeal was taken, no

cause was submitted to the revision of the Holy See, until the reign of King Stephen. And, however loyal to Mother Church monarchs might be, though occasionally, for the furtherance of their own purposes, they might make concessions to the Pope, every reader of English history knows that, both under the Norman and the Plantagenet dynasties, a jealous eye was kept on all acts, overt or covert, which encroached on the prerogatives of the sovereign or the liberties of the realm. About the middle of the fourteenth century the statute called *Præmunire* was passed,[1] a statute that forbade a suit to any foreign Court "whereof the cognisance pertaineth to the King's Court, under the penalty of outlawry and forfeiture of goods." And, towards the close of the same century, the indomitable English spirit rings through words that specially refer to Rome—"They and all the king's commons will stand with our lord the king, and his said Crown and regality, in the cases aforesaid, and in all other cases attempted against him, to live and to die."[2] Archbishops and bishops concurred in this determination; the *vox populi* and the *vox ecclesiæ* were in unison over it. Thus it was that, when Henry VIII., actuated by motives far from lofty, re-

[1] Passed in the twenty-seventh year of the reign of Edward III.

[2] In the preamble of Statutes, A.D. 1392.

nounced allegiance to the pope and proclaimed the Crown supreme over all Estates of the realm, "old and authentic histories"[1] could be appealed to in vindication of the immemorial nationality of the English Church.

The early history of Christianity in Scotland is shrouded in obscurity. Out of the haze two names, sacred and venerable, emerge: Ninian, the apostle of Galloway, who built his famous Candida Casa about the end of the fourth century, and Kentigern or Munghu, the apostle of Strathclyde, who, towards the close of the sixth century, had "his own church of Glasgu." But for the beginning of organised and continuous effort we must turn our gaze to I, Hy, or Iona, of which even Dr Johnson, with his stubborn contempt of all that was Scotch, could write with enthusiasm as the "illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians received

[1] In the preamble of Statutes, 24 Henry VIII. The words follow: "The determination of questions, in any cause of the law divine, belongs to that part of the said body politic called the Spirituality, being usually called the English Church, which always hath been regarded and also found of this sort that, both for knowledge, integrity, and sufficiency of number, it hath been always thought, and is also, at this time, sufficient and meet of itself, without the intermeddling of any exterior person, to declare and determine all such offices and duties as to their rooms spiritual doth appertain."

the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion." The story of the Irish exile, St Columba, and of his monks, of his successors, of the ancient Celtic Church, has been so often told, and told with such effect in past Baird Lectures, that there is no need to recall it. The only point, now to be emphasised in connection with it, is the independence manifest in its constitution, in its customs, and in the manner of its operations. In the sixth century, the domination of Rome had not been established, and the small but vigorous community, whose sanctuary was the remote Western isle, had a comparatively free hand in the ordering of its way. "It was in a sense," says Principal Fairbairn, "a native growth, organised according to Celtic ideas, and not according to Roman. The monasteries were missionary foundations, colleges where evangelists and preachers were trained, possessed of apostolic doctrine and authority within themselves. Episcopacy existed, as there were bishops; but it was not diocesan, its sphere was congregational or communal rather than territorial. And this character the Church retained so long as Scotland remained a Celtic kingdom; when it ceased to be this, the Church underwent a parallel transformation."[1]

[1] Contemporary Review, p. 133.

The chief instrument in this transformation was the Saxon princess Margaret, who shared with Malcolm III. the throne of Scotland. She was "a woman nobly planned," whose gifts and graces are deservedly held in grateful remembrance. But her elevation to queenly rank and power rang the knell of the Celtic Church. Augustine, the head of the Roman mission to England, railed at the uncouthness of the Scottish clergy. Margaret found them, not only uncouth, but ignorant and indolent. They had fallen from the high level of their ancestry. Retaining the old peculiarities as to the tonsure, the time of Lent and Easter, and other matters, they had lost the old missionary spirit. Fasts and festivals of the Church were disregarded. They worked on Sunday, though they rested on Saturday. The Holy Eucharist was seldom celebrated. They gave little or no instruction to the people. Their influence was on the whole pernicious. Family life, all life, was corrupt. The consort of the big rough Malcolm was an acute theologian, and a devout adherent of the Latin Church. She argued; she acted. The Abbey of Dunfermline is a monument to the pious queen. But she had a better monument—that which resulted from her strenuous endeavours to rectify the abuses that prevailed, and to diffuse spiritual

and intellectual light among the half-barbarous people of her husband's realm. Her example was a guiding star for her children, especially her younger son, David, who ultimately became king—the "sair sanct for the Crown."

Until the reign of David, the Church was little else than a desultory agency. But he carried out the ideas of his mother. It is probable that, before his time, there was a Bishop of St Andrews; but of secular clergy there is no trace in any deed. David founded bishoprics and religious houses, and began a formal division of the country into dioceses and parishes. He organised the spiritual army. The Church, from the date of his reign, grew in wealth and in power.

Its nationality was evidenced in a characteristically Scottish fashion—not primarily in resistance to Rome, but in resistance to the claims of England. Submission to the pope was the cover under which it repelled the attempted supremacy of the See of York. It would acknowledge no headship but that of the chair of St Peter. After long contentions, in which victory seemed often doubtful, it established its independence of England, the price paid being subjection to the pope. But, even in regard to the pope, the sturdy national spirit repeatedly flashed forth. The clergy would not attend, they refused to acknowledge, councils

in England, though summoned to them in the pope's name by his legate. And kings would not brook what appeared to be interferences. When Alexander of Scotland, entertained at York by Henry III. of England, was informed by a cardinal that he had been deputed by the Court of Rome to visit Scotland, and to take cognisance of its ecclesiastical condition, the Scottish king replied, "I have never seen a legate in my dominions, and, as long as I live, I never will." The cardinal persisted in fulfilling his instructions, but the king refused to see him, and, "without leave asked," he hurriedly departed.[1]

Such were the expressions of the spirit of nationality in the two kingdoms which now happily form Great Britain. But the main issue with which we are concerned is, the social efficiency of the National Churches, and it will be conceded that a condition indispensable to this efficiency is a thorough system of ministration—a division of the country into small areas or territories, each provided with a machinery by which, in dependence on God's spirit, the blessings of religion can be diffused, and the aims of the Christian society can be realised. In the National Churches of Great Britain there is such a division, and for each of the areas or territories of the divi-

[1] Cunningham's Church History of Scotland, vol. i. p. 162.

sion there is a sustenance, greater or less—an endowment for the supply of Christian ordinances. The origin and growth of this parochial economy is an interesting, and not unimportant, subject.

In the "land of the long agos," the *parochia* or parish was equivalent to what in later times was called the diocese; it was the district which the chief pastor ruled. When this was the case, there seems to have been a common purse, replenished by the offerings of the faithful in the parish, and distributed by the bishop amongst the clergy, who were sent forth to plant churches, and to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. These offerings are related to an ordinance or a custom called the tithe or tenth. Now, we do not know the precise period at which the tithe, as a religious obligation, was enforced. There are traces of it in the third Christian century, and it was officially recognised as a statutory Christian duty in the fourth century.[1] Charlemagne, in 788, gave legal sanction to its collection, but this only in confirmation of it as authorised by the Word of God. His sanction was limited to the Frankish Empire. But the widespread acceptance of the tithe is otherwise evidenced. Three years, for example, before Charlemagne's decree, legates from

[1] There is evidence of it in the treatises of St Ambrose and St Augustine.

Rome appeared in England with twenty-nine constitutions or instructions, and one of these contains the words, "We do solemnly enjoin that all take care to pay the tenth of all that they possess, because that peculiarly belongs to God, and let them live and give alms out of the nine parts."[1] "The tithe," writes Professor Freeman, "can hardly be said to have been granted by the State. The case rather is, that the Church preached the payment of tithes as a duty, and that the State gradually came to enforce this duty by legal sanctions."[2]

Before the Council of Lateran, 1179-80, the tithe might be bestowed, at the pleasure of the tithe-payer, on any church or monastery, or it might be placed in the hands of the bishop for "other pious purposes according to his discretion." But when provinces or dioceses were divided, and the word "parish" was applied to the separate divisions, "the tithes of each parish were allotted to its own particular minister, first by common consent or appointment of the lord of the manor, and afterwards by law."[3] The party receiving the parochial tithes was called the rector, but this party might be either the parson

[1] Selden's History of Tithes, chap. viii.

[2] Freeman, p. 19.

[3] Digest of the Law of Real Property, sec. 53; Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i. p. 112.

serving the cure, who was then the rector of the parish, or it might be a monastery or a religious corporation, in which case the minister serving the cure, as the representative of the monastery or corporation, was styled the vicar, and received as his stipend a portion of the tithes—"the small tithe," as it was called. There were differences of custom in the apportionment of the tithes in different countries. In some, there was a division into four parts—one part for the minister, one part for the poor, one part for the church fabric, and one part for the bishop. In others, there was a tripartite division. In others, again, the bishop received all, and distributed the amount as seemed good to him. Lord Selborne has shown that such formal apportionments did not obtain in England; and they did not obtain in Scotland.[1]

The beginning and the growth of the parochial system, with a provision for the celebration of worship and for the religious and social work of the Church, are difficult to trace. The system was more or less in evidence at a time long anterior to any action by the State. For its origination we are mainly indebted to the piety or the superstition of lords of manors and owners of lands. "When," writes Selden as to England, "devotion grew firmer, and most laymen of fair estate

[1] Defence of the Church of England, chaps. vii., viii.

desired the country residence of some chaplains that might be always ready for Christian instruction among them, their families, and adjoining tenants, oratories and churches began to be built by their orders, and, being hallowed by the bishop, were endowed with peculiar maintenance from the founders for the incumbents that should there only reside. Out of these lay foundations chiefly came those kind of parishes which at this day are in every diocese; their differences in quantity being originally out of the differences of the several circuits of the demesnes or territories possessed by the founders."[1]

In Scotland, the process in the formation of parishes was similar to that in the southern kingdom. There was an ecclesiastical arrangement for generations before any formal sanction was given by the State. How remote the date of the first ecclesiastical arrangements was may be inferred from this, that, as early as the twelfth century, the lands devoted to the ministration of religion or for religious orders by the Scottish Crown were by statute made subject to the payment of tithes. "This payment," observes Sheriff Johnston, "came to be so general that the obligation gradually acquired the force of law universally applicable to all land through-

[1] History of Tithes, vol. iii. chap. ix.

out the country without inquiry into past dedication or reservation."[1]

Thus, the parochial economy of the National Churches of Great Britain was consolidated and established. Our condemnation of the middle ages as being dark and dreary may be qualified by the recollection, that we are indebted to the piety (however at many points misinformed) and the liberality of men who lived in them for institutions that have largely contributed to the making of the English and Scottish peoples. And, with reference to these institutions, it is well—in view of statements which are persistently made—to be reminded that they were not, and are not, mere State Churches. They were not created by the State. They are not departments of the State. Public law only confirmed them in the position which they occupied, antecedently to any legal recognition, as the branches of the Church of Christ in the realms. At the Reformation of the Church in the sixteenth century, no novel framework was introduced. The old framework, lightened of some of its objectionable features, was continued under altered circumstances. There were 8467 parishes in England when King Henry VIII. severed the connexion of the English Church with the Roman See. These

[1] Handbook of Scottish Church Defence, p. 177.

parishes remained as they had been, though they were afterwards modified. In Scotland, there were 940 parishes: they were also continued, though at a later date they, too, were modified. And each parish possessed an endowment, not out of a common fund, not in consequence of any general tax, but an endowment belonging to itself, the fruit of the tithes of a past age, which the civil magistrate had secured in permanent form for the glory of God and the service of the people.

CHAPTER VII.

NATIONAL REFORMED CHURCHES—THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

THE effect of the great ecclesiastical upheaval in the sixteenth century on the development of national life, and of a national spirit in Christendom, was far-reaching. In its nobler aspect, this upheaval marked an endeavour after re-formation —that is, the forming of the Church back on the lines indicated in the New Testament. The Protesters felt that "what is first is best," that it is a more exact interpretation of the ideal. They did not question the progression of thought, but they held that the progression had been diverted from its legitimate course, by the growth of the hierarchical spirit, by the importation into Christianity of elements that were alien to it, and by the corruption of the simplicity of Christ through the dogmas, practices, and ramifications of the Papacy. Therefore, from the Cæsar of Rome

they appealed to the Lord and King of souls, and to His voice in the Word that is inspired and illumined by His Spirit.

It was an appeal fraught with manifold danger. Withdrawing the mediation of priest and Church, setting the individual in direct relation with God, and bidding him "prove all things and hold fast that which is good," it was apt to foster an individualism which easily degenerated into anarchy. In point of fact, this anarchical licence was one of the shadows that continually stole across the track of the Reformation, and that it required all the skill and the courage of its leaders to counteract. Moreover, the conception of the unity of the Church was rudely disturbed. The authority of Rome and its bishop was flouted. In the view of those who broke away from the Papacy, there was no longer any one visible centre; and Christian communities, reflecting the separations and jealousies of the nations to which they ministered, became, or were in peril of becoming, self-centred. An interesting letter of Calvin, containing his reply to an invitation of Archbishop Cranmer to attend a council in London for the promotion of unity, indicates the extent of the isolating tendency in his day, and the sorrow with which he regarded it. "The body of Christ," he writes, "is torn asunder

because the members are separated. So far as I am concerned, if I can be of any use, I will readily pass over ten seas to effect the object in view."[1]

Another kind of centre than the visible centre of the Latin Church was necessary. The Reformed Churches declared that this centre is in heaven and heavenly, not on earth and earthly. They maintained that it is the living Christ Himself, the Head of the body, Who filleth all in all. In so far as human expressions of this invisible omnipresence are concerned, they found a witness for unity in the consensus of testimony presented in the symbols of the Reformed Churches; and they promoted the sense of unity by interchanges of thought between Universities and Churches. "The catholicity of the Reformation," observes Dr Merle d'Aubigné, "is a noble feature in its character. The Germans pass into Switzerland, the French into Germany, in later times men from England and Scotland pass over to the Continent, and doctors from the Continent into Great Britain.

[1] "This is to be ranked among the chief evils of our time—that the Churches are so divided that human fellowship is scarcely now in any repute amongst us, far less that Christian intercourse which all make a profession of, but few sincerely practise."—Letters of John Calvin, vol. ii. pp. 332, 333. Henry's Life of Calvin, vol. ii. p. 126.

The Reformers, in the different countries, spring up almost independently of each other; but no sooner are they born than they hold out the right hand of fellowship. There is among them one sole faith, one spirit, one Lord. It has been an error, in our opinion, to write the history of the Reformation for a single country. The work is one, and from their origin the Protestant Churches form a whole body fitly joined together."[1]

The consciousness of a higher and all-comprehending unity is evidenced in the standards, as in the action, of Reformed Churches in the earlier period of their history. No country was more subject to isolating influences than Scotland, yet there is the vision of a communion not restricted by national limits, in the Second Book of Discipline. After enumerating several kinds of assemblies, its compilers add, "There is besides these another more general kind of assembly, which is of all nations and estates of persons within the Kirk, representing the universal Kirk of Christ, which may be called properly the General Assembly or General Council of the whole Kirk of God." Nevertheless, the centrifugal tendency was stronger than the cen-

[1] Quoted in discussion on Consensus of Reformed Confessions. First General Presbyterian Council.

tripetal. The Anglican Church, by taking a *via media* between the Latin Church and the Reformed Churches, and by the transference of its headship from the pope to the English sovereign, detached itself from the fellowship of the bodies to which, by the doctrine of its thirty-nine Articles, it was akin, and it became more and more exclusively national. Other Churches went their several ways, bestowing only an occasional glance at each other. The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed a quickening of the pulses towards unity, and the dawn of the twentieth century has been marked by striking practical expressions of the desire to reduce divisions, and by aspirations, finding utterance in unexpected quarters, for the reunion of Christendom. How these aspirations can be realised, it seems impossible to forecast; but Christian people can at least wait on God, and join in the prayer, "The Lord hasten it in His time."

The influence of the National Churches of the Continent, and of the British Isles, is too vast a subject for the survey that can be made in this chapter. We must limit this survey to Scotland, and the inquiry to which we are invited is, How far its National Church, Pro-

testant and Reformed, was, in the past, equipped for its ministry? And, How far it has fulfilled and is fulfilling its ministry to the social life of the nation?

At the time when it started on its "dim and perilous way" the condition of the Scottish people was deplorable. Long and bitter warfare with its southern neighbour and enemy had drained the resources of the country, and had spilt the best blood of its manhood. The factions of its nobles, the feuds of its clans, the struggles between the Crown and the feudal lords, had injured the arts which can flourish only in peace, had retarded every civilising influence, and, from Maidenkirk to John-o'-Groat's, had written mourning, lamentation, and woe over the life of the nation. If now and again there was a streak as of morning light, gloomy night-shadows speedily obscured it. When James V. died, leaving his crown to a mere infant, there was no strong arm or will to control and guide, and, during the regency of his widow, the situation became ever more complicated. The Church was unable either to promote liberty or to secure order. Its service for good was a thing of the past. There was still an apparatus of learning and of benevolence. It had founded the universities of St Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, and they were shedding a feeble light

on the surrounding darkness. It had established hospitals; at the Reformation, there were eighty-three, providing for the aged, the infirm, and lepers, and sometimes serving the purpose of hostels for pilgrims and travellers.[1] No doubt, too, there were good and pious souls in the priesthood who sought the welfare of their flocks. But all testimony proves that the state of the Church was incurably bad. The whole aspect of the kingdom, when Mary Stewart returned from France and assumed the task of government, was grim and stern. All social circumstances were unfavourable to kindlier graces. The constant fight with an ungenial climate, and the barrenness of much of the soil—large tracts of it being mountainous, and bringing forth only "brown heath and shaggy wood," and mere patches of the productive Lowlands being cultivated (even these, through the want of right agricultural methods, imperfectly cultivated)—made life to multitudes a weary struggle, and encouraged sullen moods and morose tempers. Manners were coarse. The nobles and gentry were illiterate. They had vast estates, but their rentals were small. They had difficulty in maintaining their families, and feeding their retainers. Some of them supported the cause of the Reformers, because they saw in its success

[1] Wallcott's Ancient Church of Scotland, p. 384.

a prospect of enrichment out of the spoils of the Church. Perhaps, they were not worse than their English neighbours; and their temptation was greater. Greedy barons? Yes, but they were very poor.

To build up a religious and prosperous nation out of such material was a task of surpassing magnitude. The material largely determined the constitution of the Kirk. In England, the movement for reformation was promoted from the head downwards, and, to a large extent, the Church retained its ancient aspect. In Scotland, it began nearer the base; it was opposed by the head of the State; and the Church reflected the popular mind. If the Genevan model was adopted, it was because that suited the temper of the people. Many of the nobles were willing enough that it should be so, since it allowed the more to pass into their coffers. On the one side of the shield was blazoned Democracy, on the other Theocracy; the latter mirroring an element never to be overlooked in estimating the Scottish character—the element of ideality.[1] The two sides of the shield have always been conspicuous;

[1] "The very greed of the nobles," writes Mr Andrew Lang ('History of Scotland,' vol. i. p. 423), "by starving the new establishment, made it democratic in tendency, while the adoption

their union marks the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*. And the two were in evidence in that first Assembly of the Reformed Kirk in 1560, which was composed of six ministers and thirty-four elders.

The Church thus constituted did not include all the constituents of the Reformed nationality; and, during the seventeenth century, there was conflict, with varying result, between it and the excluded Episcopalian constituent. But, undoubtedly, the main current of Scottish life flowed through the Presbyterianism which finally prevailed. How far this Presbyterianism succeeded in its social mission, is writ large in the history of three centuries. Much more might have been accomplished for the intellectual and social well-being of Scotland, if the wealth of the unreformed Church had been diverted into channels of public utility. That wealth had been enormous; before 1560 it amounted to a half of the entire wealth of

by Scotland of the republican theocracy of Geneva made the Kirk democratic in constitution."

"But," replies Principal Fairbairn ('Edinburgh Review,' January 1901), "it would be nearer the truth to say that the constitution determined the tendency and was determined more by the national history and conditions than by Geneva. . . . Three local conditions were friendly to a democratic Church—(1) The want of a royal person to appeal to the popular imagination; (2) the want of a single governing will to command the rising storm; (3) the need of an order that would secure liberty and law for the people."

the country. But there is nothing more pathetic than the battle over it between John Knox and the disinterested Reformers, and the nobility and lairds, the interested Reformers. The latter were willing to pass Confessions of Faith, and even to do combat for the purged Kirk, so long as they were enriched out of the resources of the unpurged Kirk. But with these they would not part. If they had been devoted to the three purposes for which Knox and his coadjutors contended—the sustenance of the ministry, the education of the youth in parish schools, grammar-schools, and colleges, and the relief of the poor—the tale told in succeeding periods would have been a different tale. Only a third of the thirds of the benefices in the kingdom was secured for the parochial ministry of the Church.

But, slender though its means were, the Church set its face bravely to the work committed to it. It is not relevant to this review to follow its endeavours, or to trace its developments, through the storms of the seventeenth century. The only point to be noted, as bearing on the influence which it exerted on national character, is the ideality already referred to: evidenced, for example, in the attitude of the Scottish army led by Alexander Leslie,—ever resolutely holding aloft the three words, Christ, Crown, and

Covenant, and still more fully evidenced in those *killing* days, the remembrance of which can never fade from the Scottish consciousness. Whatever men may think of the cause of the Covenanters, there is an unmistakable moral grandeur in the spectacle of men, dignified in their poverty by the conviction of an infinite possession in Christ and His crown, living a life to which the world gave nothing, but which they felt to be filled out of the fulness of God, and, for the sake of a treasure that they esteemed better than thousands of gold and silver,—for God's kingdom in their Scotland, — enduring persecution and death itself. And this moral heroism, this lofty ideality, was the fruit of the faith which the Kirk they loved nourished within them.

Taking what, in ecclesiastical phrase, is called a conjunct view, the work of the Scottish Church in the development of Scottish social life is the resultant of its fourfold action: First, the Ministry of the Word and sacraments in every part of the land, through a stated and endowed pastorate, responsible for all within the area of the parish. Second, the exercise of discipline by minister and session,—a discipline which those who look back on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the light of the twentieth,

may regard as harsh and stern, but as to which we may recollect, that the times needed firm moral testimony, and that what was meted out was meted out impartially to peer and to peasant. Third, the work of the Church in supervising the instruction of the young in the parish schools (and there is no more honourable feature in its record than this). And, finally, the stimulation and organisation of useful and beneficent social effort of many kinds. Besides all this, there are services which cannot be classified; services promotive of goodwill man to man, of union, of co-operation, of relief from monotonies of condition, of help in respect of all that touches the springs and principles of conduct. It cannot, indeed, be said that this social ideal has been realised in all parishes; for there have ever been, and ever will be, manifold and often grievous shortcomings. But the Church cannot be said to have missed its mark of light that for long generations has mediated between rich and poor, high and low; that has nourished in the homes of the Scottish peasantry a dignity, a moral elevation, a piety, such as that which Robert Burns, drawing on his own memory, has immortalised in the "Cottar's Saturday Night"; that has based the education of millions of souls on the answer which gives the key-word to its practical teaching,

"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever."

Let a witness speak to whose testimony no suspicion of an ecclesiastical bias can attach. A Select Parliamentary Committee, in its report to the Houses of Parliament, placed on record the following judgment: "No sentiment has been more deeply impressed upon the minds of your Committee, in the course of their long and laborious investigations, than that of veneration and respect for the Established Church of Scotland. They believe that no institution has ever existed which, at so little cost, has accomplished so much good. The eminent place which Scotland holds in the scale of nations is mainly owing to the purity of the standards and the zeal of the ministers of its Church, as well as to the wisdom with which its internal institutions have been adapted to the habits and interests of the people."[1]

Any hindrance to the utility of such an institution is a matter of concern to all who desire that the social life of the country shall be permeated by a religious spirit. And one such hindrance was occasioned by the rapid growth of the population in the nineteenth cen-

[1] Report of Select Committee on Patronage, p. 4.

tury. Districts hitherto sparsely occupied were, on a sudden, crowded with tenements for the accommodation of millworkers or miners. Rural districts were depleted, cities became congested. New social states were created with which the National Church, under its statutory provision, was unable to cope. One symptom of the revived energy of the Church, in the earlier part of the last century, was the perception of the need of a fuller agency to secure the ordinances of the Church for the increasing thousands. We recall the zeal with which Dr Chalmers knocked at the doors of the Legislature, only to find that the doors would not open to his appeal. We recall the fervour with which he and others, abandoning hope of aid from Government, set about the work of church-building and parochial subdivision—a work that was crowned with a success which the Disruption of 1843 interrupted. On this event, so far-reaching in its consequences, in political and social as well as ecclesiastical spheres, there is no need to make any pronouncement. All that need now be said is, that it secured a vast addition to churches and religious machinery, whose distribution was to a large extent in line with the ancient division of parishes. Indeed, to their honour be it said, some of the most splendid illustrations of

the efficiency of the territorial principle have been supplied by ministers and congregations of non-conforming Churches. But the responsibility of the Established Church, as the custodian of the national parochial economy in its integrity, remained; and the discharge of this responsibility, in the crippled condition of the Church, and having regard to the altered features and the complexities of the modern era, seemed all but hopeless.

Facilities for rearranging the bounds of parishes, for the provision of endowments for new parishes, and for their possession of a parochial status *quoad sacra*, were afforded by an Act of the Legislature known as Sir James Graham's Act. But, between 1843 and 1854, these facilities were taken advantage of in the erection of only thirty parishes which were chiefly in wealthier residential centres. Impatient of this slow progress, Professor James Robertson launched his provincial scheme, in which he aimed at raising a fund of £40,000 in each of the five provinces into which the country was divided, as a fund to supplement local efforts for the endowment of chapels within these provinces. A man of indomitable courage and of wonderful faith in the Gospel of the kingdom of God, a man, too, with wide social sympathies,—he

infused his own enthusiasm, his own broad-minded zeal, into the movement that he led. How vividly do those who rallied around him in the inauguration of that movement, and yet survive,—for, alas! the greater part is fallen on sleep,—recollect the glowing, if often the lengthy, utterances of the noble-hearted churchman! The note on which all the changes were rung was the call to identify the Church with the needs and aspirations of the nation. If he spoke on behalf of the Church, it was because, in his own words, "if it falls, no other Church can be established in its place; and in this case the social regeneration essential to the best interests of society must be abandoned as hopeless."[1] But his outlook was beyond the ecclesiastical pale. "The welfare of society," he exclaimed, "tends more and more, by an irresistible impulse, over which legislation can exert but little control, to suspend itself on the significance attached to man as man."[2] It was the cause of man which he advocated, and to despair of it, he protested, was "to despair of the faithfulness of God." And so he laboured until—his most sanguine hopes having been surpassed—death released him from his toil. Through his endeavours, and those of the like-minded

[1] Life of Dr James Robertson, p. 329. [2] Ibid., p. 238.

men who supported him, and succeeded him in the management of the Endowment Scheme, 408 parishes can be reckoned as having been added to the economy of the National Church, containing "a population of one and a half million, almost as great as that of Scotland in the beginning of the nineteenth century."

In other ways, increased momentum has been given to the service of the Church. Home missions, under the guidance of wise and eloquent conveners, have developed elasticities in method, as well as extensions of building. The guardianship of schools has been transferred from the Church to the community in its civil aspect; but in her own sphere, through Sunday-schools, boys' brigades, and other organisations, she has an arm—it should be a long and a strong arm—to reach to the youth of the country. And, advancing from this, there are circles of effort—guilds, fellowships, unions of many kinds—through which the Christian life acts on all the social surrounding. We cannot omit the discovery, or re-discovery, of woman as having a distinct vocation in the ministry of the Church. The deaconess and the parish sister have now their place and service. All effort, evangelistic or social, has been amplified, with a view to the comprehension in sympathetic Christian

work of the shifting and manifold phases of society.

What, it may be asked, is the result of all the activity? The answer to this question will be in great part determined by individual temperament, and by the position in regard to the Church that is assumed. The more sanguine in disposition will fasten on all hopeful symptoms, and argue from them that there is an advance towards better averages, and fuller measures of social good, along the whole line of society. The more keenly critical disposition will challenge some of the alleged evidences of progress, and hint that "reversion is ever dragging evolution in the mud." An ecclesiastical statistician will present elaborate tables of figures as proving that, though Churches toil, the churchless increase; that the signs of the alienation of masses from the Church have assumed alarming proportions, and menace the Christian life of the nation. Another, setting the question of church attendances aside, will point to the broader channels of sympathy among all sorts and conditions of men, to the higher aims and levels of action in even the humblest ranks, to the increasing urgency of the demand for better homes and for all that makes better lives, as proving that, though the Church as such may have less visibility, the Christianity

of Christ has more. The truth may lie in the mean between a confident optimism and a croaking pessimism. There is enough to make us thank God and take courage. There is enough, also, to bid us "be not high-minded but fear."

But, whatever may be the complexion of our thought as to the effect of the Church on the moral and social tone of the nation, the work to be done with all our might is to purify the springs of wellbeing, the home and the home-life, to make brighter and healthier zones for the individual units of mankind, and, in so doing, to develop the constituents of a virtuous and prosperous community. This is the duty, this marks the opportunity, of a National Church. Dr Chalmers opposed "a mere process of attraction" to "a process of emanation";[1] and more effectual, he urged, is the latter process. That process is the ideal of the parochial ministry; its work is to radiate Christ's Gospel, in its message of reconciliation, goodwill, and love, on the locality which is the scene of its influence. In the measure in which it is faithful to this, shall it bless and be blest.

[1] "People will not be drawn in such abundance to Christianity by a mere process of attraction, as Christianity can be made to radiate upon them by a process of emanation."—Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns, p. 115.

PART II.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS AND CHURCH ATTITUDES.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: POPULATION AND PAUPERISM.

In the previous part of this volume, the action of the Church on social life has been regarded from three points. First, from that of its vocation, as interpreted by the Founder of Christianity in His teaching and in His sacrifice, and as reflected in the consciousness of those who take His yoke upon them and learn of Him.[1] Second, from that of its history, in its period of struggle with the power of the Roman Empire, and with the ancient heathenisms which the Empire protected, in its period of triumph when the kingdoms of the once hostile world became "the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ," and in the ages during which it gradually established a common type of manners and morals in Europe, and determined the higher elements of European civilisation.[2]

[1] Chapters II. and III.

[2] Chapters IV. and V.

Finally, from that of its relation to national developments, and the influence which, through its characteristic institutions and ordinances, it exercised on national temperament and wellbeing. In this last regard, our special survey was limited to Scotland and its National Church.[1]

Now, we change our venue. The beginning of a new century reminds us of forces that are no longer guided or controlled by the Church, some of which, indeed, either ignore it or express antagonism, more or less overt, to it; of facts and phenomena that challenge attention and raise the question, How, having regard to them and the life-conditions which they connote, is society to be elevated, and are the kingdom of God and His righteousness to be realised? "There is no social problem," it has been said; "there are social problems." These problems—the subject-matter of the pages that follow—are many and serious.

A connecting-link between the portion of our study on which we enter and that which precedes may be found in the reference, made in the last chapter, to the rapid increase of the population in Great Britain, as constituting one of the difficulties in the way of an efficient discharge of the respon-

[1] Chapters VI. and VII.

sibilities of the National Churches. The prospect suggested by this increase is, to many minds, alarming. From time to time, calculations are presented which, assuming that the ratio of the increase will be in the future what it has been in the last fifty years, set before us such developments as the following—That two centuries and a half hence, Europe alone will contain a population equal to that of the entire globe to-day;[1] that a century hence, London will contain not far from forty millions of souls;[2] that other large cities, all the world over, will be proportionally multiplied—and so forth. Now, whilst we set such forecasts aside as merely ingenious speculations, we cannot but feel that increasing densities of population create issues, or must precipitate issues, which no wise man will overlook. Malthus has argued that the tendency is to a multiplication of human beings beyond the means of subsistence; and, in connexion with his argument, we are frequently reminded that the earth's stock of life-supporting substances is limited, and that some of these are diminishing. Moreover, it is urged that certain influences essential to vigorous vitality —*e.g.*, pure fresh air and wholesome surroundings —must be impaired by a prodigious augmentation

[1] North American Review, November 1892.
[2] Modern Cities. By S. L. Loomis.

of people to be fed, clothed, and maintained, involving, as this must involve, a prodigious augmentation of industries of all kinds, with all their inevitable concomitants, the effect of which will be to exhaust and foul the atmosphere, and make the land one vast noisy city, under a coverlet of smoke.

There is no call to give too much heed to this kind of prophesying. When the diminution of the earth's resources is emphasised, it may be replied that, probably, many of these resources have not yet been tapped, and that, with more labour, and more scientifically organised and applied labour, the capabilities of the soil may be indefinitely expanded.[1] We cannot set any limit to the possibilities of nature and of art, and we may believe that each successive period, developing its special burdens, will develop also the means by which these burdens can be met. New necessities make new ingenuities, new fer-

[1] Prince Krapotkin (in the 'Nineteenth Century') writes: "If the population in this country came to be doubled, all that would be required for producing the food for 70,000,000 inhabitants would be to cultivate the soil as it is cultivated in the best farms of this country, in Lombardy, and in Flanders, and to cultivate the meadows which at present lie almost unproductive around the big cities, in the same way as the neighbourhoods of Paris are cultivated by the Paris *maraichers*. All these are not fancy dreams, but mere realities." There are, besides, the vast spaces of the earth whose potentialities are as yet unknown.

tilities of brain and hand, new instruments and methods of production. Our faith in God may whisper to us that, if He is in the heaven, all shall be well with His world.

But one thing is incumbent on us. In its own interest, and with a view to social health and happiness, society is bound to do what a wise providence of mind directs, towards the securing of a physically, intellectually, and morally fit citizenship. Some words of Professor Huxley, bearing on this, are remarkable for the passion which he has infused into them. "So long," he writes, "as unlimited multiplication goes on, no social organisation which has ever been devised, or is likely to be devised, no fiddle-faddling with the distribution of wealth, will deliver society from the tendency to be destroyed by the reproduction within itself, in its intensest forms, of that struggle for existence, the limitation of which is the object of society. However shocking to the moral sense the eternal competition of man against man, or of nation against nation, may be, and however revolting may be the accumulation of misery at the negative pole of society, with that of wealth at the positive pole, this state of things must abide and grow continually worse, so long as Istar holds her sway unchecked. It is the true riddle of the Sphinx, and every nation which does not

solve it will, sooner or later, be destroyed by the monster which itself has generated."[1]

A grave feature in this "riddle of the Sphinx" is that the multiplication alluded to is most striking in the classes which are least able to bear it. In England, the growth in these classes is at the rate of one thousand for each day in the year. The two checks that Malthusianism would impose on this growth are, the preventive and the punitive. Under the former of these heads, there are hints, if not proposals, from which a healthy Christian instinct revolts. But the preventions to be desiderated are, obedience to the behests of prudence, and the strengthening of the nobler elements in human nature as against the baser. To glance at only one point. When all circumstances are favourable, early marriages are, speaking generally, better than marriages in later life. But those which are entered into when lads are scarcely out of their teens, and not out of their apprenticeships, and when girls are not much more than in their teens, are far from being a blessing. Almost certainly, the consequences of such unions are, homes whose scanty furnishing has involved their occupants in debt which henceforth clings to them, like a millstone around the neck, making tempers sour and conduct reckless;

[1] Nineteenth Century, February 1888.

and — what is more serious still — an offspring puny, sickly, and pithless. One of the conditions of citizenship which Ruskin lays down is, that children be well-born, and by this phrase he means that which is wanting in the case referred to.[1] Taking a wider view, children are not well-born when, as with multitudes, there is no sense of responsibility as to fatherhood and motherhood, and as to the lives that are brought into the world, and when mere animal appetite dominates over the rational, reflective self. Then, the operation of punitive checks is only too certain; and the operation brings not only misery to individuals, but a hurt and loss to society. No drastic measure, relating to population, can be conceived of that would not drag behind it a train of evils; but all who seek the real good of the people are bound to do their utmost to raise the ideals of parentage, to deliver their world from the harm of ill-born children, and, as the only efficient check on lust, so to strengthen the intellectual and moral nature that what is grossly sensual shall be subordinated to "nobler loves and higher cares." On this subject, more cannot be said; but less it is impossible to say, when we consider the problem of population, and the conditions of vigorous social life.

[1] He includes more: see 'Time and Tide,' p. 123.

When we analyse the constituents of population, we are at once arrested by the distinctness of the opposition between the two poles of our civilisation.

The aggregate wealth of Great Britain is enormous, and its growth in recent years has been by leaps and bounds. In the United States of America, the annual percentage of increase is more remarkable. There, for some time, this percentage has been nearly three times in excess of the increase of population. In his last message to Congress, President McKinley referred to the wonderful record of commercial and industrial progress during 1900. He noted that, "for the first time in the history of the States, the imports and exports had exceeded two billions of dollars; the increase of exports in that year over the previous amounting to between 167 and 168 millions of dollars, and the increase of imports amounting to nearly 153 millions." But, though the tale to be told concerning the United Kingdom does not exhibit such phenomenal results, it is one represented by notable figures. In 1899, the total value of imports and exports taken together was between 814 and 815 millions sterling, showing an increase over the previous year of 50 millions. The total annual income may be set down as upwards of £1,700,000,000, allowing for each per-

son—man, woman, child—on an average about £40 per annum, and for each male about £170 per annum.[1] Now, no sensible person supposes that an equality of share in the nation's wealth by the nation's citizenship is possible; but, in view of the immense totals of wealth which these statistics indicate, the appalling prevalence of poverty jars on the mind. One who visits the nethermost places in New York and Chicago, and observes, not, perhaps, the sodden and hideous depravity which is evident among the submerged tenths in London, and in the older European cities, but still enough and to spare of black, squalid wretchedness, recalls the two billions of dollars which the imports and exports had exceeded, and asks why this mass of impoverished life should be so vast and solid. Long dark shadows seem always to rest on material progress. Hitherto, it is affirmed, the tendency has been towards the accumulation of riches in the hands of the well-to-do, money making money, and, in the measure of this accumulation, towards rendering the poverty of the poor more abject and hopeless. There is exaggeration, sometimes culpable exaggeration, in many of the statements that are based on this affirmation; for, life-averages and conditions have been greatly improved

[1] Mulhall, Dictionary of Statistics, p. 245.

by the expansions of commerce and industry. It is the contrast of the want and woe of the lower sections of the community with the luxury that is conspicuous on the heights, and the comfort that marks the middle classes and the upper strata even of the working class, that makes the inequality harsh and glaring. But no person can be acquainted with the position of unskilled labourers, especially with that of the earners of precarious livelihoods — those who may be designated the *ins and outs*—without feeling that there is a justification for the belief that, below a certain line, the advance has not been commensurate to that above it. "The new forces," it has been said, "strike the social fabric at a point intermediate between the top and the bottom. It is as though an immense wedge were being forced, not underneath society, but through society. Those who are above the line of separation are elevated: those who are below are crushed down."[1]

By this enigma of our social life we are confronted. In the midst of the worlds in which we live and move and have our being are the wide, sad zones of pauperism and poverty. To reduce these zones, is one of the most

[1] Poverty and Progress, p. 6.

pressing obligations of a society that calls itself Christian.

Estimates of the pauper element in the population—*i.e.*, of the proportion maintained, in whole or in part, by the rates imposed on the community—vary. On one day in the year 1898, there were in England and Wales, in Scotland, and in Ireland upwards of one million and twenty-five thousand persons in receipt of public relief.[1] Mr Charles Booth reminds us that, inasmuch as the relief given is not generally permanent, the number of persons receiving daily aid must be multiplied by 2·3.[2] And, thus multiplying, he argues that, taking 1898 as the typical year, the pauper class may be set down as between two and three millions.[3] The words "pauper" and "pauperised" are often used in an elastic sense, as including the houseless, inmates of prisons, lunatics, objects of the charity of associations or individuals, as well as the recipients of outdoor and indoor

[1] Reports of Local Government Boards.

[2] Paper read to Statistical Society, December 1891.

[3] Mr Chamberlain is quoted 'In Darkest England' as having said: "There is a population equal to that in the Metropolis which has remained constantly in a state of abject destitution and misery. The submerged class, according to Mr Giffen, comprises one in five of manual labourers, six in a hundred of the population. Take three millions as representing the destitute in England."

relief—truly "a vast despairing multitude in a condition nominally free but really enslaved." Giving this elasticity of meaning to his statement, Sir Robert Giffen speaks of five millions "whose existence is a stain on our civilisation."[1] Let us realise what these figures denote. "At least one in five of the manual-labour class, of six in every hundred of the entire population," belongs to a class dependent and needy! The picture suggested is that of a procession from morning to night of thousands on thousands — the beaten in life's fight, the fallen, the unfortunate, the abjectly poor, on whose black banner are written the words Destitution and Despair. And this in a country with an annual income of more than £1,700,000,000!

To ensure strict accuracy as to the amount of pauperism, in the legal signification of the term, let us turn to the annual reports of the Local Government Boards. In the report of persons relieved in England and Wales on the 1st of January 1901, it is stated that the total number of paupers, including insane, at that date was 801,547. Taking the population as rather more than 32 millions, this means that one in every 40 persons, 2·5 per cent of the

[1] Essays in Finance, vol. ii. p. 350.

people, is in pauperism. In London, the proportion is somewhat higher. This, adopting Mr Booth's calculation, will give about 1,700,000 persons as the pauper element. The report of the Local Government Board of Scotland for 1900 informs us that "the number of poor of all classes, including dependents, in receipt of relief on the 15th May 1899, was 97,947, of whom 84,969 were ordinary poor, and 12,978 were lunatic poor. Of these, upwards of 43 per cent were 65 years of age and upwards, more than 11 per cent were children, and nearly 45 per cent were between the ages of, say, fourteen and sixty-five." Again accepting Mr C. Booth's estimate, this may be held to indicate that about 200,000 persons in Scotland were, in the year referred to, in receipt of larger or smaller sums by way of relief. The hopeful circumstance noted in the reports is that pauperism is decreasing. In England, the proportion of paupers was much smaller in 1901 than in any year between 1861 and 1875. It has fallen from over 40 to 25 to the thousand. In Scotland, compared with 1868, the year presenting the highest record, "the number of poor per thousand of the population has fallen from 41 to 23, a decrease of 18 per thousand of the population." The question, of

course, arises, whether a considerable element of this decrease may not be attributable to additional stringency in the application of tests,—a stringency which, whilst reducing the number aided from the rates, possibly leaves a great multitude on the lower side of the region between poverty and absolute want—on the brink of a Slough of Despond.

The effect on social life of the existing legal system of relief, with workhouses or poorhouses, outdoor aid, armies of inspectors and officials, committees and councils, is a topic too large and many-sided to admit of discussion in these pages. With the objections that are taken to it we are all familiar—such as, its tendency to destroy independence of spirit, and to discourage thrift by making dependence on the parish the accepted prospect of the poor; its fostering of unfilial attitudes on the part of grown-up children to parents; its promotion of habits of mendacity and deception; its shedding of poison into the springs of charity, and narrowing of the channels of benevolence by making the care of the poor "a burden on the rates." And, in these and other objections, there is a force which those who are best acquainted with the working of the Poor Law will be the most ready to admit. But the Poor Law is a fact; and, in

view of all the circumstances with which we must reckon, some statutory provision is indispensable. Persons cannot be allowed to perish from want. This at least is due from society to its unfortunate members. Criticism of the methods according to which a debt both of citizenship and humanity is discharged is good, if its aim is to indicate better methods, or to remove abuses which have crept into administration. In the meantime, we are bound to do all that can be done to minimise the evils attendant on the machinery of relief, and to make that as efficient as it can be.

The State has, to a great extent, superseded the action of the Church. Could the Church, in view of the magnitude of the problem to be solved, and of its domestic divisions, undertake, by the free-will offerings of its membership, to administer the aid which has been thrown as a charge on the entire citizenship? A well-known and instructive experiment in this direction is associated with the great name of Dr Chalmers. When the population of Glasgow was not a fourth of the population of this day, he organised an agency which, dispensing with the imposition of assessments, endeavoured to prove the sufficiency of the "use and wont" of Scotland, by constituting the Church and its apparatus the centre of all administra-

tion.[1] The town council of the city gave the ardent philanthropist and economist a fair field for the carrying out of his plan. It suspended the operation of the Poor Law in the parish of St John's. The "separate, independent, and exclusive management" of the funds to be raised by collections in the parish church was intrusted to him. He poured the energy of his large heart into the work, and devoted the practical capacity with which he was abundantly endowed to the organisation of his parish, with its 10,000 souls. He mapped out small districts, which deacons, taking the place of inspectors, visited, carefully ex-

[1] Dr Chalmers was translated to St John's in 1819. Sir Henry Craik, in his interesting 'History of a Century,' gives a sketch of the administration of funds for the poor prior to the Poor Law of 1845: "In 1597 this was intrusted to the kirk-session. In 1672 there was a discretionary power given to levy an assessment; but even though the heritors were combined with the kirk-session in raising funds, their distribution rested with the latter. In the last decade of the eighteenth century the ratio of the enrolled poor—even although the imposition of an assessment had been common for fifty years—was still very moderate. In 1791 it was only 18 for each thousand of the population as compared with 48 in England. In the first quarter of the present [the nineteenth] century it increased considerably, but there was still a widespread unwillingness to follow the lax example of England. It was only when discontent and altered social conditions forced the problem on men's attention that the necessity of action one way or another was felt. The necessity became more urgent year by year, and at length in 1840 it forced on an official inquiry, the fruit of which was seen in the Poor Law of 1845."—Vol. ii. p. 322.

amining all cases of poverty, and giving relief as it was ascertained to be deserved. The experiment was a success, so long as the genius and magnetic force of Dr Chalmers directed it, and so long as the after-glow of that genius and force was felt. Before he began his labours, the cost of providing for the poor of the district covered by his parish was about £1400 annually; under his supervision that sum was reduced to £280 annually, and the condition of those who were relieved in the area of his operations was better than that in the assessed districts of Glasgow.

But the success was short-lived. After a ministry of four years in St John's, he who was "the pulse of the machine" removed to St Andrews. For some time, the impetus of the movement he originated was sustained. Ten years after his removal, an English Poor Law Commissioner reported that the system had proved triumphant, that it was then in perfect operation, and that not a doubt was expressed by its managers of its continuing to remain triumphant. The Englishman did not see that the glow was fading. That which he declared to be in perfect operation was, shortly after he had given his testimony, abandoned, and, so far as the relief of the poor was concerned, the parish became part of the ordinary Poor Law

system.[1] The experiment, which thus succeeded and then broke down, has never been repeated. For what it accomplished, a Chalmers was necessary, and even he could not bear the strain of the toil for more than a brief period. And Glasgow and the world have travelled far, and developed new social states, since his day.

When we speak of relief, it must be understood that the legal system is intended to offer only a last resource. This intention is obscured by a change of feeling which shows that a leaven of evil import is at work. To "go on the parish" is too often regarded as a first, rather than a last, resource. In former days, there was a sense of shame attached to it. The necessity to do so broke the heart of honest man or woman. To prevent it, the relatives of the unfortunate were ready to pinch themselves. In the present day, that sense of shame is not so widely prevalent. Those who have sat on committees of boards or councils know how frequently sons, even when earning a fair wage, need to be compelled by law to contribute to the support of aged parents; and clergymen of large city parishes are called frequently to sign applications, for the benefit of the poor roll, by fathers or mothers suing their children for an aliment. "It is not a cause for

[1] Dr Hanna's Memoirs of Dr Chalmers, vol. ii. pp. 287-315.

wonder," writes an inspector; "for the parents probably did little for them but bring them into the world, and let them fight their way in it as best they can."[1] Perhaps so, and if so, the more the pity. But even good parents are neglected by their offspring, and the thought running in the mind is, that the parish is bound to look after the poor, and that relatives, who have enough to do to provide for their own families, are released from responsibility. "We pay the rates," it is said; "why should not our folk get the benefit?" And, taking a different view-point, there are persons, not a few, who find the workhouse with its labour easier than the hard toil in the world outside it. Now, it needs to be enforced that the Legislature has undertaken to secure means of subsistence only for those who are bereft of such means. In rigidly restricting the agency of the Poor Law to this — the lower line of poverty — it is acting in justice to a very considerable number of ratepayers, who are only a little way above that line, and, though in many cases there may seem to be hardship, acting also for the best interests of society. To steer a course which shall avoid both the Scylla of harsh treatment and the Charybdis of unwise treatment is no easy matter.

[1] Report of Local Government Board for Scotland, 1900.

Administrative methods, it may be added, must be frequently revised, and sometimes recast. Officialism is slow to move, and, when it does move, is apt to be clumsy and limp in its motion. But, let it be gratefully acknowledged that, within recent years, a considerable advance in the discrimination and the classification of the poor has been effected. The casual are separated from the habitual, those who need sharp discipline and rigid tests from those who have sunk through no moral fault of their own. There are two classes in the ranks of pauperism that specially appeal to compassion. The one is the class represented by the 43½ per cent in Scotland of sixty-five years old and upwards; the other is that represented by the 11½ per cent of children.

With regard to the latter class—children too often ill-born and unwelcomed—shall we not indorse the saying of the late Sir John M'Neill in his evidence before the House of Commons, "I would rather that no child were in any poorhouse"? "The day is not far distant," added Sir John, "when we shall have no children in the poorhouse that can be suitably boarded out." That day, we may believe, is in the immediate future. The erection of cottage homes, unattached to any poorhouse, is a policy which

obtains increasing acceptance; and there are hundreds of children boarded out, in both the Lowlands and the Highlands of Scotland, under regulations favourable to their physical and moral development. Separated from unwholesome environments, they are being trained in the habits of useful and healthy life.

With regard to the former class, there are, undoubtedly, many who, whilst entitled to pity, have no claim on esteem; but many also are recipients of aid, because a place can no longer be found for them in workshop or on farm, and there is none to help them. In the Parliamentary Blue-Book, there is a statement in the report of a superintendent of a Poor Law district which merits attention. It is this: "Several recent changes in legislation and conditions of employment act somewhat as factors tending to increase pauperism. The Employers' Liability Act, while on the one hand relieving the parishes of persons who have actually received injury in employment, if they are fortunate in making good their claim, hinders the engagement of aged persons, or persons with physical and mental disability, such as defective eyesight or hearing, weakness of heart (causing faintness), or dulness of intellect. The increase of joint-stock companies and co-operation and trades-unionism in some respects tend to

increase pauperism; for, where individual firms would formerly retain a servant, although unable to perform a full day's work, the eagerness for dividends, and the necessity of paying standard wages, do not now permit of his employment."[1] Poor old men! The world, it seems, does not want them. The decree of big dividends and standard wages is, "To the poorhouse with the old men." It makes one sad to see the veteran, who has borne the heat and burden of a long day, consigned to the scene of withered leaves and flame-spent cinders.

A question which of late has been eagerly discussed, but to which no adequate reply has yet been given, is, What can be done towards removing the stigma of pauperism from the aged who have lived honourably and honestly, and whose good labour has helped to make the nation's wealth? Some years ago, a scheme of national assurance against sickness and old age was formulated, but the judgment of a Committee of the House of Commons dismissed it as impracticable. Within the last ten years, proposals for "old-age pensions for the people" have been made, not only by doctrinaire philanthropists, but by such politicians and men of affairs as Mr Chamberlain. It cannot be said that these proposals have excited

[1] Report of Local Government Board for Scotland, 1900.

any enthusiasm among the classes whose benefit they contemplate. "We do not want old-age pensions," exclaimed a Labour leader. "Our men die of hardship before old age arrives. What we want is to make their short lives more liveable and comfortable."[1] In this utterance, he interprets a prevalent feeling. Men who live from hand to mouth are apt to take short "dips into the future"; "sufficient," they think, "for the day is the evil [or the good] thereof." What relieves a present pressure, or gives a present advantage, appeals to them with more force than any scheme to meet a contingency at a period which, to younger persons, seems so remote as sixty-five years of age. But, independently of this trend of thought, the carrying out of any plan of pensions involves difficulties in detail, the way through which has not yet been made apparent. One of these difficulties is to prevent the pension from degenerating into a bounty, which in effect would be only another form of outdoor relief. A second difficulty connects with the issue, whether in the bestowment of the bounty there shall be discrimination of the aged poor.[2] In Ger-

[1] Mr Ben Tillet, quoted in 'A Plea for Liberty,' chap. x.

[2] In a speech delivered lately Mr Morley said: "The problem is one of supreme difficulty. You have a difficulty in the method of

many, an endowment is secured for selected wage-earners, but the plan there adopted cannot be regarded as completely successful. And any investigation as to means and merit conducted by officials is almost certain to be both irksome and unsatisfactory. The contention of Mr Charles Booth and others, that the contribution to a national pension fund, available for persons of all sorts and conditions at sixty-five, should be universal and compulsory, would seem to be the only system of direct State intervention by which the end desired can be secured. But this does not meet with favour. "It would mean," remarks an essayist, "the substitution of a poll-tax—vexatious, costly, and demoralising—for the Poor Law, the cost of which is met by taxation based on a far more equitable adjustment of demands to the means of the taxpayer."[1]

To arrive at some practical and practicable scheme, by which the service of those who have grown grey and old in useful labour shall be sub-

attaining your object—the question of whether this or that phase of the work is desirable or not is in itself very difficult. The means of attaining it without doing more damage than good, by injuring the self-reliant and self-supporting institutions which the labouring classes have splendidly built up for themselves—that constitutes a situation which no man with any sense of responsibility will deal with lightly or off-hand."

[1] A Plea for Liberty, chap. x.

stantially recognised, may not, in a future time, pass the wit of man. In the meantime, might not much be done by employers, by the benevolent, by society in general, towards the encouragement of self-help through co-operative and trades unions, savings banks, and friendly societies? The Friendly societies have wonderfully developed in their operations and in their resources.[1] They are registered, and are under careful supervision. They have enormous funds. Some of them—especially the Oddfellows and the Foresters—have special pension funds, whereby a young man, beginning at twenty years of age, can ensure 5s. a-week at the age of sixty-five for the payment of 4¼d. a-week.[2] Unfortunately, the facilities thus offered are not taken advantage of so extensively as is to be desired; but no way more educative of self-respect and of a wise forethought could be found than that of offering inducements to the working classes partially to provide, by means of them, for the liabilities of loss of health, or loss of power to serve, when the envious years write their mark on the frame of the workman.

So long as the only mode of relief is that of

[1] Mr Chamberlain has recently advocated a new beginning, with the co-operation of the Friendly societies.

[2] This rate is taken from the tables of the Foresters' Society.

the Poor Law, the old who, through no fault of their own, are obliged to drop out of the ranks of the army of toilers should be treated with all possible consideration. Homes for such, apart from the ordinary poorhouse, might be provided, if not by law, at least by benevolence.

There is much connected with the administration of statutory relief that cannot be regarded as satisfactory. The blame may be divided between the system, and the unsatisfactory social states to which it is related. But Christian wisdom can do much to elevate even the sunken mass of pauperism; and, though the Church in its corporate capacity no longer directs the machinery, it can complement or supplement the machinery that is operative. A poorhouse, as now ordered, is a melancholy place: vitality feeble, low-toned, much of it vicious; but human souls are there, precious to Him who sees with other and larger eyes than ours. There is room in it for the exercise of sympathy, and for the blessings of Christian ordinances. The writer of these pages has no more pleasant recollection of his service in Glasgow than that which is associated with worship, and the celebration of the Holy Communion, in the Poorhouses of the Barony and the City of Glasgow. And there is an ample opportunity for the

exercise of judicious benevolence in connexion with parochial relief. "The two organisations of relief," it has rightly been said, "should be, indeed, as it were twin-sisters, and should act as completely in union with one another as twin-sisters generally are supposed to do. Without this action, the greatest amount of good cannot be done either by the guardians on the one hand or the clergy, ministers, and other charitable agencies on the other."[1]

[1] Handy-Book for Guardians of the Poor, pp. 179, 180.

CHAPTER IX.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: POVERTY AND ITS CIRCUMSTANCES.

THE pauperism with which the State deals through a special legal machinery indicates "a worm gnawing at the core of England's rose." But the poverty which prevails is not to be measured by the number of persons who are recipients of relief and their dependants; the zone is much wider: it is a zone of darkness which presses against all that is most attractive in the outer aspects of our civilisation. A stranger surveying the chief thoroughfares, the terraces and villas and parks of our cities, or the towns and smiling homesteads in the neighbourhood of our railways, might suppose that the death of poverty had been swallowed up in an abundance of comfort. But he would soon find that he had looked on only one side of the picture. Even in rural districts, there are "in-

sanitary cottages with bad water and starvation food"; and, assuming that poverty means a scanty supply of the things which are necessary to maintain healthy vitality, the condition of masses congregated in the great centres of population would remind him of grim spectres that are ever flitting through our Vanity Fairs. The statistics of Mr Charles Booth have been often quoted. Sometimes their entire reliability is questioned. But they have not been disproved; they have not been shown to be exaggerated by observations and inductions as painstaking as those on which he builds. What are the results that he claims to have established? Taking only a general summary, they are the following. In London, the proportion of persons in the middle and upper classes is only 17 per cent of the inhabitants, whilst the proportion of persons shading from poverty down to absolute want (exclusive of all fairly employed and regular labour) over the whole city is 30 per cent. In thirty-seven districts, each of which contains more than 30,000 souls, and the total population of which is 1,719,000, the latter proportion varies from 40 per cent to 60 per cent.[1] No doubt, London is exceptional; but it is exceptional in its heights

[1] Life and Labour of the People in London.

as well as in its depths, and against the splendour of the heights the impression of the depths is terribly silhouetted. All who know the state of other cities are aware that in them approximations to the proportions in the capital reappear. The prospect, indeed, is not all gloom, and only gloom. There are "larks' notes ringing out of what seem to be ravens' croaks." In the most congested parts of the city there are peaceful homes, and among their denizens may be found beautiful illustrations of real nobility and genuine happiness. But so long as ratios like those referred to obtain, there is "an estate of sin and misery" the consciousness of which haunts the mind. Professor Huxley, who says that he has an abhorrence of sentimental philanthropy, protests, "If there is no hope of a large improvement of the condition of the greater part of the human family, I should hail the advent of some kindly comet which should sweep the whole affair away as a desirable consummation."

Now, the matter as to which the Church of Christ may examine itself is, How comes it that, having respect to the mission intrusted to it, to the call addressed to it to search out what is lost and driven away, to the enthusiasm of humanity that ought to burn and shine in it, this mass of poverty has been allowed to form and to grow

into such dimensions? Has "the gold become dim and the most fine gold been changed"? Has the age broken away from Christian ideals? If these ideals are still efficient, and the conscience is still true to them, how is it that the organised and disciplined fellowship in Christ cannot cast this demon of poverty out? The question is one an answer to which is to be sought only in the light of the Master's mind. By and by, we shall see what the Church has aroused herself to attempt and to do. Here, let it be merely emphasised that no graver issue can occupy Christian thought and tax the resources of Christian energy than that of the most effective ways and means of discharging the duty of Christianised civilisation to the circles on circles of under-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed human beings whose world is, and ever has been, a slum, quitted by them only when the summons to the unknown beyond reaches them, or when they are located in their purgatory, the workhouse.

For, the Church is not to be a mere Lady Bountiful, with a countenance always beaming with good nature, and helping all and sundry in a random and inconsiderate manner. Benevolence must be made a study. It should be regarded as a science; in its practical forms, it should be an art. There is nothing more necessary than a care-

ful investigation into the causes and the roots of poverty, a discrimination of the persons who appeal to sympathy, and of the methods by which poverty may be reached in its causes rather than temporarily relieved in its manifestations. The distribution of charity at present is indescribable. It is said that, apart from the donations of individuals which cannot be estimated but which represent an enormous sum, charitable societies of Great Britain expend between ten and eleven millions sterling annually,[1] and that in London alone four millions are given away, the greater part being devoted to the relief of distress and to purposes of charity.[2] Nevertheless, in spite of all the work done and all the gifts bestowed, there remain the great percentages of the insufficiently supplied. The impression is widespread, and is not unwarranted, that much of the liberality which is elicited is "flung to the winds like rain," that much tends to form habits of thought and of feeling which degrade the character, sap the spirit of self-respect, and the faculty of self-help; which, instead of constituting a leverage for the uplifting of the person (the only permanent benefit), make the relief of the hour the harm and injury of the life; which, by reason of the overlapping of

[1] Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics, p. 112.

[2] Loomis, Modern Cities, p. 45.

agencies and of the absence of concerted plans and intelligent principles of action, demoralise the poor; that thus and therefore any gains realised are not commensurate to the expenditure of money and strength on the securing of these gains. Let benevolence try its ways. Let Churches more wisely consider the poor. It is part of their business; let them give more heed to it, as being not a luxury but a business. More attention should be given by the clergy, and by the membership of Churches, to social topics, and to the principles and methods of finance, as they bear on the support of the weak by the strong. One thing is most urgently demanded—viz., the focussing of charities, their organisation, co-ordination, or subordination on well-regulated lines. In large cities, an object-lesson in this direction has been given by the establishment of societies aiming at a more efficient direction of efforts for the relief of distress, and at the repression of mendicity. These societies have already done good work; the value of their service will increase in the measure of their ability to harmonise the many and confused expressions of philanthropy, and to make their influence more thoroughly helpful in the reduction of poverty.

If the parochial system were more fully realised, if the principle of locality were made more

effective, the National Churches would possess the most favourable of opportunities for co-operating in a grand national movement to stub up the roots of the upas-tree of poverty. Would that they rose to the height of this opportunity! How miserably petty and inferior seem many causes which bulk largely in the ecclesiastical view, when set against the facts of those spheres of sunken life as to which an English prelate recently remarked, "Unless they are carefully considered, they will generate a tornado which, when the storm clears, may leave a good deal of wreckage behind!"[1]

But the great problem of poverty cannot be dissociated from the features of social life. Hereafter, reference will be made to economic and industrial conditions which, in the opinion of many, are chiefly responsible for the evil deplored. At present, let us consider some of the habits and circumstances with which it connects.

By universal consent, a melancholy prominence must be given to intemperate indulgence in alcoholic liquors. The fatal lines of this indulgence are not written on the so-called working classes only. They are legible in all classes. But among

[1] The Bishop of Winchester, quoted in 'Social and Present-Day Questions,' p. 11.

those on the lower side of the social scale the ravages are most glaring; they are presented in their coarsest and most revolting aspects, and in their most ruinous consequences, so far as these can be traced. What the exact percentage of poverty directly attributable to intemperance may be, there is no need to discuss. Mr C. Booth, after a careful investigation of 4000 cases "which were representative of all the poor in the districts from which they were drawn and not only of those who apply for relief," gave only 14 as the percentage due to drink and its attendant thriftlessness. Even if this were the whole truth of the matter as to the entire poverty of the kingdom, the statement would be sufficiently serious. But he reminds us that, in this estimate, he has regarded drink as only "a principal cause." "As a contributory cause," he adds, "it would no doubt be connected with a much larger proportion."[1] It is impossible to make a sharp division between principal and contributory cause. It has been proved in the most conclusive manner by the testimony of judges, of guardians of the poor, of prison authorities, of experts in the treatment of the insane, by the evidence of Commissioners

[1] Life and Labour of the People in London, vol. i. pp. 147, 148. 1600 of the 4000 cases belonged to the lowest class of labourers and to those who are chronically in want.

and Commissions, by reports innumerable, that by far the larger amount of the wretchedness, the squalor, the crime, the vice, in city and in rural districts, is traceable to drink as the cause that is in or behind all occasions and contributions.

Messrs Rowntree and Sherwell, in their admirable treatise on the temperance problem, shew that the sum expended on alcoholic beverages in the United Kingdom in the year 1899 — viz., £162,163,474—is equal to nearly one and a half times the amount of the national revenue, or to all the rents of all the houses and farms in Great Britain and Ireland. "Two-thirds of this amount," they further point out, "are spent by the working classes, who constitute approximately 75 per cent of the population! That is to say, more than £108,000,000 must have been spent by 30,400,000 persons (representing 6,080,000 families) belonging to the working classes. In other words, every working-class family spent on an average in 1899 £17, 15s. 3d., or 6s. 10d. per week, on alcoholic liquor, which, assuming the average income of a working-class family to be 35s. per week, is equal to nearly one-fifth of the entire family income."[1] The state-

[1] The Temperance Problem and Social Reform, pp. 9, 10.

ment is appalling. For, we must remember that these families include women and children; they include also very many families of strictly sober members; they include likewise the aged and the infirm. And, if deductions covering these elements are made, what a huge quantity of drink must be consumed day by day, night by night, by the residuum! Who can calculate all that this involves? In a vast multitude of instances, the money consumed on drink must be taken from that absolutely required for the necessities of vigorous existence. Having regard to this criminal waste, what wonder need be felt that devilry and misery meet us everywhere! What wonder that there is such a mass of persons whose vitality is low, whose constitution, physical and moral, is feeble; that sodden faces, brutalised countenances, manhood and womanhood in which the mark of the beast has all but obliterated the image of God, and childhood wan and weary and weeping bitterly, linger everlastingly about the purlieus of the city!

Let us pass from the region of statistics. The impatience which Carlyle once expressed, when figures as to intemperance were arrayed in his hearing, is intelligible. "Sir," exclaimed the Prophet, "I desire to hear nothing more on that

disgraceful subject." Disgraceful it is, and unspeakably sad. The question with which we are concerned is, What can be done to arrest the hæmorrhage to which it points?

In 1845 De Quincey alluded to "the most remarkable movement in society which history perhaps will be summoned to record—that which in our own days has applied itself to the abatement of intemperance."[1] The language is somewhat inflated, but the movement glanced at signalised an awakenment of the Christian conscience to the magnitude of a waste and an iniquity which had been allowed to assume portentous dimensions. Something must be done to check the desolations of alcohol. What could it be? Men and women pondered the issue. All honour let us accord to those who, notwithstanding the derision with which their efforts were greeted by society, and the icy coldness with which they were viewed in Church courts and by churchmen, toiled on, puzzling over the issue, and doing what they could to arouse their generation to the sense of the sin lying at its door. To them may be applied the words of Hegel concerning heroes: "They derived their purpose and vocation not from the calm conservative course

[1] De Quincey's Works, vol. xi. p. 146. The movement originated in 1826.

of affairs, but from a concealed fount, from that inner spirit which, impinging on the surface of the world as on a shell, shivers it to pieces, because it is another and quite foreign force; they were men who seemed to draw their life-impulses from themselves, and whose influence produced new conditions that appeared as their work. Yet they had really no consciousness at starting of the great ideas they were helping to unfold, often being plain practical men with an insight into the needs of the time—what indeed was waiting for development—the very truth needed for their age and already found in the womb of time."[1] The pioneers of the temperance cause were plain practical men. They were not idealists, though they helped to unfold great ideas. They had no political designs. They had no elaborate programmes. The first article of their union was, "Stop drinking, for your own sake or for your neighbours' sake, and thus work towards the abatement of intemperance." A simple creed, the product of simple, earnest minds! But, as the movement which they originated spread, objects of effort multiplied. The traffic in drink came more fully into view. The politician, critical, but often sympathetic, emerged on the scene. Richard Cobden expressed a widespread senti-

[1] Philosophy of History, Introduction.

ment when he declared that temperance reform was at the root of all reform.

Two points present themselves for consideration. One, the personal duty of Christian man or woman as to the use of intoxicating drinks as beverages; the other, the action of the citizenship, or of the State, with regard to the traffic in such drinks.

All, of course, are of one mind in condemning the abuse. And, in respect of that which constitutes the abuse, there has been in recent years a marked progress in feeling. The convivialism that was general in the upper and middle classes not a century ago is now impossible. Ministers of State do not make speeches after imbibing a bottle of port wine. Gentlemen do not drink after dinner until they can drink no longer. The toper in whose blood alcohol is always swirling is now a marked person in any circle of well-bred persons. Polite society insists that its members shall not offend the unwritten law of sobriety; and, whilst on festive occasions costly and various wines are circulated, there is no pressure to partake of them. Any excess is regarded as a misdemeanour, and the declinature to partake is not criticised. A public opinion has been created which, laying hold of the classes, has gradually developed this change of habits; and it

is argued that temperance among the masses will be most effectually promoted in the same way. Not, that is, by drastic measures of repression, but — as the consequence of better education, better homes, and increased self-respect—by the uprising of a sentiment which will stigmatise intemperance as a disgrace to the intemperate and an outrage on the community.

So far this contention may be allowed. But the question remains, Whether one of the most potent allies in promoting the condemnation of the abuse which is desired would not be the example, on a large scale, of abstinence from even the use of intoxicants? Those whose position is clearly defined have a freedom of hand and voice which others cannot have. To many they may seem to be intense, even fanatical; nevertheless, they force attention, and their persistency, their earnestness, sustains the movement which otherwise might lag. A strong temperance sentiment, with a distinct platform, permeating the working classes, would be an immense influence in uniting their ranks against their most deadly foe.

The platform need not be that all use of strong drink is sinful. Very few can adopt a position so extreme. But many may and do accept another position, which is intelligible,

which is the expression of a genuine Christian spirit, and which may be held in perfect charity with others who do not accept it—the position that, in view of the temptations to which multitudes are exposed, of the misery and shame associated with the quaffing of ardent spirits, it is expedient, in the exercise of Christian liberty, to forego a right to the use, not merely, perhaps not at all, for personal safety, but rather for the sake of others, so that the protection and helpfulness of the covenant of Christian brotherhood may be more effectually realised, and the protest against indulgences which lead to intemperance may be emphasised. On the matter of personal duty, every man must be fully assured in his own mind, interpreting his attitude not by mere likings or dislikings, but by the law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus. Intemperate speech on the part both of abstainer and of non-abstainer should be avoided; all judging this rather that they should "strive in offices of love to lighten each other's burden in their share of woe."

The traffic in spirituous liquors, and the licensing laws by which this traffic, as a monopoly, is controlled, are part of the most urgent and difficult subjects of the day. It is admitted by

persons of all shades of political opinion that some fresh legislation is called for. The points in which both the majority and the minority reports of the Royal Commission on Licensing Laws are agreed may be fairly held to express the moderate yet earnest British mind. And they are such as these: That the present law needs to be "consolidated and simplified"; that the licensing authority needs to be reconstituted, and its powers to be at once more fully defined and amplified; that beer-houses and fully licensed public-houses should be subjected to more watchful review, should be more strictly regulated, and their number should be greatly reduced; that sales of intoxicants to children should be forbidden; that the closing of houses on Sunday should be extended; that powers of arrest for drunkenness should be increased, with penalties to be imposed on those who, knowing of the drunkenness, allow any one to remain on the premises; that habitual drunkenness should be treated as persistent cruelty, subjecting the culprit to the law of the land, and entitling wife and children to separation and protection. All who acknowledge the necessity of some reform may be regarded as in substantial unanimity thus far. But the differences appear when any practical measure is proposed. Governments are

afraid to submit bills to Parliament. They have usually burnt their fingers in doing so. Either they have not satisfied the more ardent, or, in the attempt to do this, they have offended the more cautious; and there are so many platforms claiming to be considered that they have run the gauntlet of an unsparing criticism. They have been brought always into collision with a compact body organised for opposition to any course which threatened to interfere with the interests of the trade. For, the "Wine, Spirit, and Beer Association" is enormously strong; so strong that Lord Rosebery has gone so far as to say that "if the State does not soon control the liquor traffic, the liquor traffic will control the State."

In these circumstances, what is the patriotic, the magnanimous, attitude of Christian citizenship? Without presuming to dogmatise, it seems to be, the closing of the ranks over such proposals as commend themselves to the largest number of those who desire a real and substantial social reform. Division only creates the opportunity for such as oppose all reform, and postpones indefinitely the prospect of any satisfactory legislation. Prohibitionists, local vetoists, and threefold optionists, may well resolve to hold their flags in reserve, and in the

meantime join with moderate men, who are doubtful as to these flags, in securing what all can agree to press now. Nor need they manifest an undue pertinacity on such an issue as the compensation of licence-holders when the licence, for no alleged fault, is taken away. If the legal right is not asserted; if, in consideration of the conditions and expectations which have grown up under the educative influence of law, an allowance is made, as a matter of grace and expediency, not of right; if this allowance is not made good by any taxation, but simply out of the trade itself; it does look like stubbornness to reject a compromise by which the co-operation of many good and true men is assured. Half-way measures are sometimes obnoxious to those who are whole-hearted in the advocacy of views which they conscientiously hold; but it is a gain to get half-way: the half must be reached before the whole way is travelled; and the refusal to act with others unless all that is contended for is granted will prevent the attainment of even the half-way; will keep the matter where it has been for years—unsettled, and every attempt at a settlement frustrated.

Now, the recommendations of Lord Peel and the minority of the Royal Commission on Licensing form the basis of a new national movement

in furtherance of temperance reform. They differ from the recommendations of the majority in several important respects. They are more definite. They are less encumbered by restrictions and reservations. They give more power to the licensing authority. They are tentative, allowing the experience of a period of seven or five years to guide as to further action. They deny any legal right to compensation; they contemplate an allowance to the publican whose licence would cease, under the arrangement by which "on" licences would be reduced in the ratio of 1 to 750 in towns, and 1 to 400 in country districts, for so much of the seven years' or five years' period of whose gains he is deprived, but this not from a public rate, only out of a fund raised by an annual levy on the other licence-holders. At the end of the seven years, or, in Scotland, the five years, no allowance would be made; the number of "on" drinking-houses would be reduced by more than a half; and a fuller revision of the licensing system in the light of the knowledge obtained would be possible. In support of this scheme, might not reformers, whatever their peculiar positions in the army of reform may be, join hands and agree to make common cause? If all that every one desires is not interpreted in it, much that every one desires

is; and the united front, in behalf of a measure that is not associated with what politicians might designate fads, would go far in carrying the measure through the parliamentary ordeal. There is wisdom in the advice lately tendered by the Bishop of Newcastle, "Not to be discouraged and discountenanced if a measure which may be carried does not come up to all expectation, but to make the best of what is possible and practicable, and then, when this has been tested and tried, to go on to something else which may seem to be a farther advance in the same direction."

Apart from legislative action, much remains to be done in the way of providing counter-attractions to the existing public-house. The charm of the public-house is largely owing to its being a place where men can congregate, gratifying their social instincts, and breaking the dull monotony of their life. If we would save men from the dangerous, we must supply the wholesome and really recreative sociality. Do as we will, to many the superior place, with the superior entertainment, will have no charm. Those who have toiled in the endeavour to reach persons who frequent the smaller drinking-houses, and to give them a better variety for their leisure hours, know how disappointing the toil is. The men most wanted prefer to smug in their old haunts. But

some are curable; and there is the prevention which is better than cure. One of the main objects of effort is, by the power of a purer taste, still more of a higher affection, to keep the manhood and the womanhood of our cities from the associations of the house licensed for drink, and to provide amusements and interests which can make existence richer and brighter. People's palaces, cafés, clubs, &c., render an important service. There is a touch of fine satire in the excellent proposal of Messrs Rowntree and Sherwell to hand over the whole profits of the liquor traffic in a locality to a central State authority, and to make an annual grant from this authority for the establishment and maintenance of recreation centres, whose primary object shall be to counteract the influence of the drink traffic — the *sole* benefit which a locality shall receive from the profits of the traffic.[1]

In the forefront of the circumstances of poverty is the nature of the houses in which the poor live their life. There can be no doubt that the wretched dwelling, with all its attendant features, is largely a consequence of intemperance; but there can be no doubt also that it is largely a cause of intemperance. Where food is insuf-

[1] The Temperance Problem and Social Reform, p. 590.

ficient, where squalor reigns, where the atmosphere is vitiated and unwholesome, the craving to get out, to realise some additional sensation, some fuller life, leads to the only appreciated source of the desired stimulus. And a reckless unconcern for all except the gratification of the moment is a concomitant of habitual poverty. What can be expected of those whose rearing and whose residence are in garrets, or cellars, or fetid dens — places in which all that protects the modesty of woman, that educates the higher qualities of man, that supplies the necessities of healthful existence, is only conspicuous by its absence? The only result to be looked for from such surroundings is short, sunless, stunted, degraded lives—starvation scarcely kept at bay—rounded by a pauper's or a criminal's grave.

Let us review for a moment or two the housing of the lower, the more seamy, side of the population. Glasgow, as described by Sir James Bell and Mr Paton, will serve as our illustration. First, there is thrown on the canvas the common, or the model, lodging-house, in which yearly 10,000 persons find a shelter — "the hotel of the very poor, where mingle persons of all nationalities, who have fallen from all ranks, and from positions of independence and responsibility, tramps, tinkers, labourers, sweeps, thieves, and thimble-

riggers; with low moral tone, and habits and sometimes language unclean."[1] There, at a rate not exceeding 6d. a night, sleep, and feed as best they can, these motley companies of the wandering and weary of foot. Next, the impression on which the eye rests is that of "the farmed house," taking the place of the furnished house of the better circumstanced citizen. In the wynds, lanes, and back properties of the city it is to be found: its rooms "fitted out with a bed or beds, some bedding, a table, two or three chairs, a grate, a kettle, a pot, and a little crockery," let at rents varying from 4s. a-week and upwards.[2] Next, comes the one-roomed house, the subject of Mr Bright's graphic picture on the occasion of his rectorial address to the University of Glasgow. More than 30,000 dwellings with one room exist in the city, occupied by upwards of 100,000 citizens, paying on an average a rent of 2s. weekly—"miserable dens tenanted for the most part by a class almost as migratory as that in the lodging-houses."[3] Finally, the eye rests on "the ticketed house," having not more than three apartments, which, by the Police Act of 1866, the authorities have power to enter in order to measure its cubic contents.

[1] Glasgow: Its Municipal Organisation and Administration, p. 192.

[2] Ibid., pp. 193, 194.

[3] Ibid, p. 194.

If these contents do not exceed 2000 cubic feet, they are entitled to state the number of feet, and the number of sleepers allowed in the house according to the prescribed measurement, on a ticket or plate fixed to the door. There are 25,000 such ticketed houses in various districts, and "the inspected population forms an army of at least 60,000, in which are the bulk of the socially dangerous elements."[1]

Great improvements have recently been effected. The Police Act of 1890 gave the police commissioners authority, on the report of the medical officer, the sanitary inspector, and the master of works, to declare any house or part of a house to be unfit for human habitation, and to affix an order that after a given date it shall cease to be inhabited, the proprietor being allowed a right of appeal to the sheriff. Hundreds of dwelling-houses have by the exercise of this authority been closed; large portions of streets have been demolished; and, instead of the former insanitary tenements, new blocks with airy courts and passages and all modern appliances have been erected. The Glasgow corporation justly claims "to have accomplished a great work in lengthening and strengthening the

[1] Glasgow: Its Municipal Organisation and Administration, pp. 195, 196.

life of the poor and making their condition more bearable, if we cannot say enjoyable."[1]

But the shadows are still long and dark. The population in many parts of our cities is too dense, and the rate of mortality is, therefore, high. Especially is this true of the infantile mortality. Glasgow has been referred to. In illustration of the death-rate among children, let us refer to Liverpool, of which it has been said, justly or unjustly, that "it is the most unwholesome place for little children in the whole country." In the report of the medical officer of health for 1890, it is stated that "the range of mortality is from 105 per thousand in the district where it is the lowest up to 260 per thousand in the district where it is the highest." Allowing an annual death-rate of 100 per thousand to be unavoidable, it will be seen that in some districts (and these are the poorest) there is a vast amount of preventable mortality. An investigation into the circumstances of upwards of 1000 consecutive deaths, in quarters in which infantile death was excessive, brought out that "in 21 per cent the families might be described as extremely and exceptionally dirty; in 18 per cent the mothers went out to work, leaving the

[1] Glasgow: Its Municipal Organisation and Administration, p. 199.

infant in the custody of others, frequently in the custody of another child who could give it no proper attention; about 11 per cent of the total were living in dwellings unfit for human habitation; in upwards of 25 per cent, and these are the cases where the mortality appears to be highest, the parents were markedly intemperate." The results thus ascertained as to Liverpool are indicative of results which, though not perhaps to the same extent, have been ascertained as to other cities. Without the sufficiency of warmth, food, air, of things bright and grateful, which nature demands, all life is pathetic; but most pathetic is child-life. Merry often is the romp of the gutter child, playing in the foul precinct of its home as blithely as the more favoured and fortunate; but he or she who plays is the one who has survived: how many are taken after having only begun to be! how many, pinched and wan, remind us of the lines—

> "They are weary ere they run.
> They have never seen the sunshine, nor the glory
> Which is brighter than the sun!"[1]

Good houses, with good environments, for all workmen, and especially for the poor, at a

[1] The Cry of the Children, by E. B. Browning.

charge which will allow a sufficient margin for things requisite to vigorous life—this is a problem of the day. High ground-rents, along with the price of labour and material, and the amount needing to be written off for deterioration of property, make it one difficult to solve. Three kinds of agency aiming at its solution may be noticed.

1. Those who have visited the Greater Britain beyond the western and the southern seas have been led to contrast the comfort and independence of the working classes, able through the aid of building and land societies to purchase and own their homes, with the condition of their brethren in the old Fatherland. Building and dwelling societies do not build: they make advances, repayable by instalments, on real property in land or in house, to their members. There are thousands of such societies in the United States. By means of the facilities that they offer, more than 50,000 workmen in the city of Philadelphia own the houses in which they live. In Australia also, a large percentage of workmen, by the same aid, enjoys the same privilege. Birmingham gave a lead in the United Kingdom in 1847; and, at this date, building societies in England can be numbered by many hundreds. Unfortunately, in the earlier

period of the movement, some societies were not sufficiently safeguarded, and their failure, besides discrediting the cause, frequently involved their members in serious losses.

2. Philanthropy, too, has taken the practical form of rearing or improving homes for the poor. In London alone, nearly five millions sterling, including the Peabody gift, have been thus spent, and a sum of one and a half million has been recently left for this object. One of the most interesting developments of benevolence in this direction is that which is associated with the name of Octavia Hill, a lady whose zeal has been always balanced by a rare practical wisdom. She purchased inferior and insanitary houses, gutted them, put them in good order, abolished professional factorage, and organised a staff of voluntary collectors, who, whilst receiving the rent each month or week, became also the friends and advisers of the family. Her desire was to infuse more light, more beauty, more sweetness of life into the houses. Her example and service were infectious: many tenements in Great Britain, on the Continent, in America, in whose ordering her ideas with modifications have been carried out, contain those who have ample reason to call her blessed.

3. But the third of the agencies alluded to is the State. In some quarters, a demand has been loudly articulated that the civic society shall undertake "the compulsory construction of healthy artisans' and agricultural labourers' dwellings in proportion to the population." Now, much has been done, and well done, by corporations, such as Glasgow, in the erection of houses on approved plans and having rents fixed at moderate rates — rates that do little more than cover the interest of the outlay and the unavoidable tear and wear. The experiment has been hitherto fairly successful, and an object-lesson in the right way of house-building has been given. It is obvious, however, that municipal action must be cautiously and prudently organised. The houses that it erects must be provided "only in places where they can be built at a fair profit"; and there are always the risks of change in the suitableness of localities and of deteriorated values. But for the State, the Government of the country, to become the capitalist, or to advance the capital necessary for providing sufficient and good lodging for all in the several districts of the country, is one of the impracticable points in the socialist programme. The most that, in existing circumstances, it can do is to authorise and enable

municipalities, on certain conditions, to obtain loans for building, extended over long periods; and, in the interests of all the citizenship, as well as in those of the working class, the money spent on good houses is well-spent money. The bad house in the close slum is a hotbed of disease. The good house in the good situation means increase of strength to those whose labour is essential to wealth, and is a gain, from a sanitary point of view, to the community.

In connexion with housing, two desiderata are pressed. The one is decentralisation—by procuring areas at some distance from the city and erecting on them cottage-homes, or houses of another type than the barrack-tenement, thus providing fresh air for the inmates, and relieving the congestion of residential city districts. And the other —the accompaniment of this—is cheap and easy transport for workmen. That these objects are desirable, none will doubt. To some extent they have been already realised, and to a still greater extent they could be realised. But, whilst many might avail themselves of the facilities thus offered, the temporary nature of employment and the complications as to shifts of labour must prevent the mass of labourers from moving so far afield. Good houses near the scenes of toil, with all possible helps to healthy life, and with such

supervision as, without unduly interfering with liberty, shall ensure that the houses are well kept and maintained, are an urgent necessity; and to meet this necessity should be one of the first obligations of citizenship.

But, when all is said that can be said as to better houses and environments, it must be recollected that the essential element in the problem is—the better people for the house. The dwelling is, undoubtedly, a most important auxiliary to happy and righteous living. It is absolutely indispensable to wellbeing. But the home is more than the house. The best of houses may be the worst of homes; the worst of houses may yet have something at least of the air of a home. For, the home includes the character of the inmates, their mutual and reciprocal service and kindness, relations sweetened by affection and sympathy, gentle dispositions, manners promotive of purity in thought and action. Where these things are and abound, the humblest fireside is transformed into a holy place: in the peasant's hut, in the one- or two-roomed habitation, there can be heard "the melodies of the everlasting chime." This may seem to many merely a part of an old song; but the old songs are often the interpretation of the truest feeling. Anyhow, it indicates the special sphere of the Christian

Church and its ministry. The Church associates itself with all that tends to uplift and complete humanity, with every endeavour to give additional zest and brightness to life. But the province that is peculiarly its own is the building up of manhood in moral vigour and in spiritual elevation. It looks to the home more than the house; its ideal is the family united in "keeping the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

CHAPTER X.

PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS: LABOUR AND THE COMMONWEALTH—SOCIALISM.

PAUPERISM and poverty, the seamy side of social life, formed the subject of the two last chapters. But the consideration of the duty of Christian citizenship with regard to them is met by a protest which is loud and emphatic. The protest is this: "All that you contemplate will not heal the hurt. The root of the evil is left untouched; the seat of the mischief is left unvisited. The ills that you trace are not on the surface of society; they belong to the interior; they are not the sign of maladjustments which can be rectified by a wise and far-reaching philanthropy; they are the consequence of a radical unsoundness, the evidence of utterly wrong and false conditions. 'The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint' because the social fabric is based on, and is reared up in,

injustice. The principles and the applications of its economy are fatally and cruelly unrighteous. Nothing short of a revolution, in respect of all that forms the content of the nation's government and wealth, can set the life of the people right. Without this, all that you propose or can propose will be a mere fiddle-faddling with the misery you seek to relieve; in and by this, and in and by this alone, can there be a real and permanent improvement. 'Small measures do not merely produce small effects; they produce no effect at all.' Go to the root of the matter; nothing but a new era, bringing in a new political and social constitution, will cure the fever-sores that are now malignant, and that are bound, in ever-increasing malignity, to spread."

This protest interprets that mass of opinion which is usually designated Socialistic. The term Socialism has not been in current use for more than between sixty and seventy years,[1] but the ideas that it crystallises have, in a kind of nebulous form, influenced minds in all ages. They found expression in the democracy of

[1] "It is a disputed point whether it first arose in the school of Owen, or was invented by Pierre Leroux, the author of a system known as 'Humanitarianism,' or had for author Louis Rebaud, a well-known publicist and a severe critic of socialism."—Flint on Socialism, p. 11.

Greece,[1] and in both the Republic and the Empire of Rome. In the ecclesiastical system of the middle ages—with its monastic brotherhoods and its religious orders, with the guilds and fraternities that it sanctioned, even the feudalism that flourished in its midst — there were anticipations of the theories with which we are familiar. But these theories assumed more distinct proportions towards the dawn of the nineteenth century. The way for them had been prepared by the French Encyclopædists, and by authors of varying hues of thought. Rousseau had sung the praises of a state of nature when there was no private property on the earth, and when all men were equal. Babœuf[2] had propounded the scheme that may be regarded as the rough draft of developed socialism—the scheme of a democracy in which all inequalities shall be abolished, all superfluities cut off, and all property transferred to Government, to be distributed to every citizen

[1] "The Greek theory, though it likewise regards the State as a means to certain ends, regards it as something more. According to it, no department of life is outside the scope of politics; and a healthy State is at once the end at which the science aims, and the engine by which its decrees are carried out."—The Greek Theory of the State. By Charles John Shebbeare.

[2] The Christian name was Joseph. Inasmuch as he had no admiration of the Joseph of Scripture, he renounced the name and substituted for it Caius Gracchus.

according to his need. These conceptions of civil society and its structure and objects were stirring the thoughts of men before the French Revolution, and during its stormy period in 1793. And thereafter, in Saint Simon, Proudhon, Fourier, Louis Blanc, and others, French socialism was provided with an eloquent advocacy and an active missionary propaganda.

But it was not until the nineteenth century was well advanced that this type of view assumed a distinct economical outline, and was embodied in distinct organisations. Prior to that date, men like Robert Owen had projected communistic societies; and ardent spirits, such as Coleridge and Wordsworth, during the brief period of their enthusiasm for "liberated France," had sketched ideal pantisocracies. But it was after Waterloo had been fought, it was when Europe was suffering from depressions and reactions subsequent to long years of war, unrest, and drainage of resources, that the master minds of the new movement appeared. And not France, but Germany, gave the mightiest impulse — the chief priests of the movement being Karl Marx[1] and Lassalle,[2]

[1] Born at Trèves, in 1818.

[2] Born at Breslau, in 1825. The epitaph on his tomb is "Ferdinand Lassalle, thinker and fighter."

both of them of Jewish origin. They had imbibed the teaching of the new Hegelian school of Philosophy; and they fittingly represented Germany—"too thorough," as Marx says, "to be able to revolutionise without revolutionising from a fundamental principle, and following that principle to its utmost limits." "Therefore," as he adds, "the emancipation of Germany will be the emancipation of man. The head of this emancipation is philosophy, its heart is the proletariat."[1] Marx expounded the fundamental principle; he, Lassalle, and their allies were ready to follow it to its utmost limits. What the principle is and what the limits are, all can read, mark, and learn in the Bible of the Socialist—the treatise of Marx on Capital.

When we turn to Great Britain, we can discern a preparation for the theories thus systematised in habitudes of philosophical thought which were developed in the nineteenth century, and in certain social features which the era of mechanical invention ushered in.

From the closing years of the eighteenth century many streams of tendency issued, whose effect was to modify both ethical and political opinion. A more liberal spirit had been infused into the popular theologies; the scepticism of

[1] Article in the 'Deutsche Französische Jahrbücher.

Hume had "coldly towed" the age towards abysses from which, nevertheless, it drew back; the empirical character of the Scottish school of philosophy had obtained a vogue; the influence of the destructive theories that originated in France had been widely operative;—these forces, combined with a more vivid perception of political and social injustice, helped to form a body of thought which, rejecting *a priori* and metaphysical notions, made experience a guide, and utility the standard both of public and of private action. The patriarch of this school was Jeremy Bentham, who borrowed from Priestley the celebrated phrase, "The greatest happiness of the greatest number,"[1] and accepted it and applied it "as a plain as well as true standard for whatever is right or wrong, useful, useless, or mischievous in human conduct, whether in the field of morals or of politics." Keeping in view the end indicated in this phrase, Bentham insisted on the need of a thorough, a root-and-branch, reform of laws and methods of administration; and his contention was enforced and extended by his followers, the foremost of whom was James Mill. They provided "a political philosophy for radical reformers," and their philosophy rapidly spread.

[1] The phrase is sometimes ascribed to Hutcheson, and it is traced to Helvetius.

In important respects, it differed from, yet by the diffusion of its main ideas it prepared the way for, socialism. Utilitarians of the earlier period held that "all Government is one vast evil." This also is the contention of the extreme socialistic anarchist; but they held that it is a necessary evil, and that it needs, not to be abolished, but to be prevented from doing harm by regulation. They anticipated the view of the socialist so far as to affirm that, under control, the State might act on the whole life of the people; but "a tendency towards State socialism Bentham would have detested above all things, and yet that is the direction inevitably taken by supreme authority where the responsibility for the greater happiness of the greater number is imposed upon it by popular demand."[1] They looked on mankind as a unity, they regarded the collective more than the individual good, and urged that the individual must give way to "the greater number"; but, whilst to this extent socialistic, they favoured competition, insisted on the liberty of the individual, and maintained the inevitable operation of economic laws. To them, the chief function of the State was the protection of the subject; any movement beyond this line they regarded with jealousy. But,

[1] Edinburgh Review, April 1901.

although differing at vital points from socialistic doctrine, English utilitarianism prepared for it. It emphasised utility as the one mark of light to which all else is subordinate, and by regard to which all else must be adjusted. It held up social happiness as the end to be promoted, often through the sacrifice of the unit; and by its denunciation of social injustices and inequalities, and its insistence on justice as the one condition of wellbeing, it disposed towards sympathy with a voice which quivered with the passion for justice to the exploited multitudes.[1]

But with the advance of the nineteenth century intellectual and political apprehensions assumed a more earnest and spiritual tone. The utilitarianism of Bentham and James Mill was frigid and feeble. It scarcely recognised a motive higher than an enlightened social selfishness. Its only certainties were empirical. It gave no final authority to religion. Its *summum bonum*, as Arnold pointed out, is not identical with human life. And thus, whilst it did good service in quickening the conscience of the nation as to righteousness, and in pointing to needed reconstructions, "it achieved little success in the enterprise of providing new and firmer guidance and support to

[1] 'The English Utilitarians,' by Leslie Stephen, gives an admirable history and criticism of Utilitarianism.

mankind in their troubles and perplexities "[1] A more potent breath was required to fill the sails; and this breath came from three sources. From the region of abstract thought,—through the deeper hold which the idealism interpreted by Coleridge gained, and ultimately through the spread of Hegelian conceptions among select but ardent minds, largely due to the magnetic power of the late J. H. Green of Oxford. From the political world,—through the disappearance of statesmen of the type of Lord Melbourne, and the ascendancy of men who felt the reality of the two nations in Great Britain—the nation in and the nation out, the nation rich and the nation poor—and the necessity of realising the harmony that might quench the discords. And, finally, from the Church of Christ,—in consequence of a revival of religious and moral life. The rationalism which had dried up the channels of enthusiasm was shaken off. A new enthusiasm for Christ was a new enthusiasm of humanity. A freer, broader view of His relation to mankind, and of the relation of men through Him to God and to one another, opened up vistas both into the truth and the worth of personal life, and into the solidarity of the race headed in the Son of Man. Measured by the vision of the Incarnate Lord, injustices,

[1] Edinburgh Review, April 1901.

oppressions, excessive competitions of man against man, stood in broad relief, as not only wrongs, but as crimes and sins—denials of the brotherhood which is rooted in the sonship of men to the one Eternal Father. It was this spirit of life that led to the endeavours after co-operation which Mr Maurice and Judge Hughes so strenuously promoted, and to the sympathy with the miseries which the Chartist riots of 1848 revealed —a sympathy which Charles Kingsley with fierce, wild eloquence interpreted in 'Alton Locke.' It is this spirit of life that is the inspiration of the phase of socialism (if the name can with strict propriety be given to it) that is distinguished as Christian.

Thus, climates of judgment and feeling were caused to which the exposure of unjust and degraded life-conditions appealed, and by which, even when the economic platform of the socialist was declined, a mental inclination was developed towards the interventions of society, in its organised form,—the State,—which the socialist advocated.

Now, besides the poverty and untowardness of lot which the Bread Riots and the Chartist conspiracies of the earlier half of the last century evidenced, fostering an acuteness of discontent which gave increased impetus to revolutionary ideas,

the discovery and application of steam-power, with all the inventions introduced in connexion with this power, tended to a wider separation of the two nations referred to. The gap between the master and the workman thus created did not exist in an earlier day. Master, journeyman, and apprentice, were nearer each other in circumstances and in toil. They were visibly associated in the production for which all together laboured; and the work had more of a human interest in it. There was less specialisation. The labourer was a work-man, not a work-hand. When the loom was guided by the hand, weavers were comparatively independent persons: in the village or the county town many of them plied their task, having their game at quoits when the pause in the day's work occurred, and discussing with one another things great and small in Religion and in Politics. The weaver was an individualist, often an opinionative Radical. All this was changed when mechanical power came into use, and one machine could do the work of hundreds of men. The reign of capital and of the capitalist began; colossal mills and factories were started, whose heads were separated by a great gulf from their employés. Warning voices had been sounded at the first stages of this new departure. Robert Owen prophesied that steam

machinery would degrade and impoverish the working classes. De Tocqueville bade men keep their eyes anxiously in the direction of modern manufactures; for, he said, "if ever a permanent inequality of condition and aristocracy again penetrate into the world, it may be predicted that this will be the channel by which they will enter."[1] It seemed as if these anticipations were being fulfilled as the century proceeded. "The robust Saxon," exclaimed Emerson, "degenerates in the mills to the Leicester stockinger, to the imbecile Manchester spinner—far on the way to be spiders and needles."[2] The specialisation which was developed turned work into a cheerless drudgery, in which there was little to interest the mind, and no prospect except an everlasting grind at the one thing. And, at the opposite pole, was the master and owner of the machinery, personating a new type of aristocracy very different from the type of the old. The old nobility for the most part lived among their tenantry. The relations between them and their tenantry were not wholly commercial. There were many interchanges of personal feeling: kindly relations were often an inheritance from past generations; there was a common fund of associations, local and historical.

[1] Democracy in America, Book II. chap. xx.

[2] English Traits, p. 240.

"The estate" was a subject of pride and interest alike to tenant and to peer or squire, and a reciprocity of services of various kinds linked the family in the hall or castle to all the families on the estate. But this new aristocracy was commercial in all its attitudes to the workers employed. By the exaction of the toil, and the payment of the wages, the bond was fulfilled. In many cases, the bond was exceeded, and acts of consideration and benevolence were performed. But it was an excess of that which was accepted as the contract. The mill-lords, the cotton or iron aristocrats, rose to the heights of opulence, and only occasionally did they stoop from their heights to survey the condition of those by whose labour they were made wealthy. Nor has the position improved; in some respects, it has become worse rather than better. It was possible to impress the new aristocracy in the earlier period with a sense of moral responsibility for those whom they employed, and the illustrations of this sense of responsibility were frequently noble. But limited liability companies, syndicates of many sorts, have become the order of the day; and to these, as such, the one concern is the dividend.

Now, all this marks one of those changes in social estate as to which Mr Lecky says, that "in widening the chasm and impairing the sympathy

between rich and poor they cannot fail, however beneficial may be their effects, to bring with them grave dangers to the State. It is incontestable," he adds, "that the immense increase of manufacturing population has had this tendency."[1] And we need not limit our view to the manufacturing element. In recent years, another class has been largely augmented—the class of those who amass wealth by combinations, rings, pools, speculations of one kind and another, whose fortunes are not made through capital going to support productive labour—rendering the separation of wealth-land still more harsh, and the inequality still more glaring.

Add to the impression some concomitants of the alterations in social life effected during the bygone century. The rush from the rural districts into the great centres of industrial activity depleted the country, congested the town, and is the cause of the constant tendency of a large section to poverty—the section that is composed of those whose means of livelihood are irregular and uncertain, and of those the nature of whose employments subjects them to risks of accident to limb and to loss of health. And the amount of child-labour, which is a result of the competition of modern industry, threatens to injure the phys-

[1] England in the Eighteenth Century, vol. ii. p. 693.

ical and moral tone of the community. In workshops, in home industries, on the streets, thousands of children are daily at work. The law of the land, indeed, protects them. Ten Acts bearing on this protection stood in the Statute-Book sixty years ago: the ten have been multiplied ten times. But, notwithstanding all the protection as to age, manner, and hours of employment, the fact remains that children earning wages, sometimes in addition to the work of school, are pressed into services, even in evasion of the law. In purchasing the evening newspaper from the boy or the girl who offers it, we little think of what this one item —street-hawking—signifies. A Manchester school board reports that 66 per cent of the children committed to industrial schools is composed of street-hawkers; and magistrates and police officials have again and again reminded us that this child-work tends to form habits of loafing, and to destroy the aptitude for continuous and strenuous effort.

The influence of such, and of many other, features in producing the discontent that is the ally of socialism is obvious. Karl Marx went to London in 1850, and there he resided for years. The immediate result of his mission was not encouraging. He agitated, he wrote pamphlets: in 1864, on the formation of the

International Working Men's Association, he raised the battle-cry of an earlier time, "Proletarians of all nations, unite!" His labour seemed to be in vain. The association was short-lived. Sick at heart, he retired to Paris, where he died in the sixty-sixth year of his age. But the seed that he sowed, and that apparently had died, was quickened. Out of the ruins of the Working Men's Association arose, in 1881, the Social Democratic Federation. The efforts that had preceded it in England were wanting "in the fundamental principle," and in "the purpose to carry that to its utmost limits." The new federation was thorough: and eager spirits—such as the poet Morris, Hyndman, Dr Aveling, Marx's son-in-law, and the Rev. Stewart Headlam—rallied around it. It had a brief career of prosperity, and then it was split into two parties—the seceding party, led by Morris, forming the Socialist League. From that league also Morris at a later date seceded. In Scotland, one socialistic society inclined to the confederation, and another to the league.

In the present day, there are several organisations—Labour Leagues, &c.—propagating socialistic tenets, conspicuous among which is the Fabian Society, including persons of more or less pronounced views, whose tracts and essays

are widely circulated. The most influential of all agencies is the New Unionism, which has largely captured trades-unions. There can be no doubt that the socialism which finds a variety of expression in Great Britain, on the Continent, in the United States, is an important factor in social life, and one to be anxiously scrutinised. What is it? What does it inculcate? What are its "utmost limits"? What are the good and the evil, the beneficial and the dangerous, elements in it? What in it is to be resisted? What is to be utilised? These are questions which the Church must face if it would serve its generation. The labour problem, with all that adheres to it, is one of the problems of the hour.

Let us discriminate.

1. Is socialism to be regarded as the inevitable consequence, or the necessary trend, of democracy? That it is so is the assertion of many who anticipate the downfall of what they style the *Bourgeoisie*—the society whose dominating element is that of the middle-class capitalist. Babœuf, when he took the name of Caius Gracchus and formed the union of the *égaux*, urged that a real democracy can attain to its ideal only by means of socialism; and German writers, such as Stahl, look on it as the natural

terminus of democracy. Now, there is a close alliance between the two. The one, indeed, postulates the other. Its theory of the State must be a democratic theory. At its core, there is the conception that all have a share — the extreme view is an equal share—in the entire good of the nation, and that the Government of the nation should be organised on the recognition of this common interest, and for the purpose of giving full effect to it. But, as has been frequently pointed out, it depends on the nature of the Government and the conditions of the people whether the movement towards socialistic distributions shall or shall not be allowed to overbear the freedom of the individual, and shall or shall not be so controlled as to secure the utilities which Collectivism can realise, whilst allowing ample scope for personal enterprise. In the great military empires of the Continent, democratic feeling is bitterly hostile to the actual Government,—the more pronounced sentiment is bitterly hostile to all governments, —and it insists on a radical revolution in all that concerns the State. On the other hand, in the United States of America, with its non-military and democratic constitution, the idea on which the executive has been built up is that its aim is the protection of the individual

citizen, in order that he may have free and full play for his energy, and that he may have the undisturbed enjoyment of its fruits. There are checks on the possession of land, but there are few checks on commercial and industrial operation. The one thing provided for is, that every man shall have the opportunity of doing the best he can for himself without the intervention of the powers of the State. And though socialistic tenets have a following which, as the population increases and the complexities that such an increase causes multiply, will probably become larger, the main current of opinion is strongly anti-socialistic.

The position is, that socialism must "either mean industrial democracy or nothing."[1] But democracy as a form of government does not necessarily involve socialism. Some of the most strenuous upholders of democracy have repudiated socialism. De Tocqueville, for example, put the issue thus in the French Parliament: "Democracy extends the sphere of individual independence; socialism contracts it. Democracy gives every individual man his utmost possible value; socialism makes every man an agent, an instrument, a cipher. Democracy and socialism coincide only in the single word

[1] John Ruskin as Social Reformer, p. 204.

equality. But observe the difference. Democracy desires equality in liberty; socialism seeks equality in compulsion and servitude."[1] Without wholly indorsing this statement, it may be held that, though the democratic apprehension of society demands "a self-government in which the whole of the self, the organic experience and judgment of the whole rational system, shall find direct conscious expression,"[2] this demand is separable from that of the socialist —from the contention that the State shall not only express the experience of society, but shall undertake the administration of industry, and shall distribute the tools and instruments of production to the citizens.

2. What is the relation between socialism and communism? That they are related at vital points is made evident by the study of both systems. But to neither is the whole contention of the other necessary. To the socialist, a kind of communism is essential; for, his demand is that inequalities of estate shall cease, and communism implies equality of estate. According to some Continental socialistic programmes, nations are to be broken up and the element of nationality is to be eliminated by the formation of small communities, in which property shall be held in

[1] Speech in 1849. [2] Ruskin as Social Reformer, p. 206.

common, and so distributed that all their constituents shall be equally benefited.[1] But this is an extreme view, the adherence to which is very limited. Many advocates of socialistic tenets insist on only the minimum of the communistic conception. On the other hand, whilst the communist must hold to a collective ownership of land or of goods, he may, and frequently does, part from the socialist on the question of the intervention of the State. In a previous chapter, reference was made to the monastic institutions of the mediæval period, whose only enforcement was a religious motive and the voluntary self-abnegation of those who entered the orders. In the United States of America, there are, or lately were, more than seventy fraternities, among them being the sects of the Shakers and the Rappists, whose bond of union is partly materialistic, partly ethical, partly religious, but which have no political character or aim. Their sole object is to practise certain rules of life and conduct, based on the principle that each member must contribute to the commonwealth in service regulated, as he himself must be controlled, by the will of the fraternity or its head, or, as in the case of the Shakers, those who are supposed to interpret the Christ-Spirit. To this extent, therefore, there is

[1] This was the proposal of some Spanish and Italian socialists.

an acceptance of the collectivist ideal, but there is not an acceptance of the expression of this ideal propounded by socialism.

3. Further; in the present day, persons differing in political sentiment are united in the desire and endeavour to reduce inequalities of opportunity, and terminate the exploitation of masses of the population. Are they to be regarded as, if not socialists, tending towards socialism?

It is in the interest of the agitator to paint the iniquity of existing social arrangements with a brush which has been dipped in the strongest possible colours. Marx, for example, described the *bourgeoisie* reign to be the conversion of society into an aggregate of beggars and millionaires.[1] Who that includes in his purview all the facts of the situation can be misled by such a description? Who can indorse the assertion that the condition of the labouring class under the heel of capitalism is simply a movement from a bad into an ever worse? These are exaggerations which common-sense contemptuously rejects. "The more things improve, the louder becomes the exclamation about their badness." This is (as has previously been remarked) because, first, the general improvement sheds an intenser light on the features that are grim and sad; because,

[1] Contemporary Socialism, p. 141.

second, the social conscience has been more fully educated and is more sensitive in regard to them; and because, third, every advance in wellbeing creates new wants which clamour to be satisfied. Nevertheless, though overdrawn representations are set aside or largely discounted, earnest men and women of varying shades of opinion keenly feel all that is only too true in the socialist's indictment, and are ready to dismiss preconceptions or prejudices in the attempt to find a solution of the problem presented. But they are not, on this account, to be ranked as socialists.

Lately, when referring in the House of Lords to some proposals in the direction of social reform, the Prime Minister said: "They are connected with great evils, and no one who is not absolutely blind will deny the existence of these evils. It is our duty to do all we can to find remedies; even if we are called socialist for doing so we shall be reconciled to it." A good man, in supporting what he believes to be right, is not concerned as to the terms that may be cast at him. But we only confuse words when we attach the name to those who devise liberal measures for the amelioration of wrongs and ills, whilst they separate themselves from the revolution that is behind the name. In 1848, M. Proudhon was asked by a magistrate, "What is socialism?"

He replied, "Every aspiration towards the amelioration of society." "In that case," said the magistrate, "we are all socialists." "That is precisely what I think," rejoined M. Proudhon. But Professor Flint, who relates this, rightly demands, "What, then, was the use of the definition?"[1]

4. Once more; is it to be argued that the extension of the powers of the State for the promotion of material and moral wellbeing means socialism?

Practically, the *laissez faire* doctrine of economists has been abandoned. John Stuart Mill, as the interpreter of *laissez faire*, laid it down as a first principle that "the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their members is self-protection; the sole purpose for which power can be rightly exercised is to prevent harm to others."[2] We have travelled far beyond this position. Mere self-protection is not now regarded as "the sole end" of the interference of mankind collectively. Mere prevention of harm to others is not now regarded as "the sole purpose for which power can be rightly exercised." The State is not now viewed merely as a constable, with the two commands, "Keep moving," and, "Hands off from one

[1] Socialism, p. 23.

[2] Essay on Liberty.

another." It is looked upon as the instrument by which, through legislation confirming action initiated by individuals or by public bodies, and in certain cases initiating action, the good of the community may be furthered, healthier and wealthier life may be secured, and society may be enabled to make increase to "the edifying of itself in love." And if in recent years it has more and more acknowledged an ethical character and responsibility, is not this only the carrying out, in the changed circumstances of the day, of a traditional ideal of government? When our forefathers maintained that it is the duty of the State to provide for the moral and religious welfare of the people, and therefore to establish and confirm the Christian religion, they virtually asserted that, as the guardian of all social interests, the State is bound to protect and promote the righteousness which exalts a nation. Many Legislative Acts, whose object is to make life more wholesome and virtuous, received the royal assent during the Victorian era. Amended Poor Laws, Factory and Workshop Acts, compulsory Elementary Education without the charging of fees, Workmen's Compensation Acts, Acts for inebriates, Acts forbidding the sale of spirituous liquors to children, are illustrations. And, in other ways, the power of

collective intervention has been enlarged. The control of the telegraph system has been added to that of postal communication. The Legislature has sanctioned the action of corporations, with a view to better housing and to the recreation and health of the labouring classes. Means of locomotion and of telephonic exchanges have been municipalised. We are using the powers of the State with ever-increasing readiness, not simply for the protection of individual citizens, but for the promotion of the greater happiness of the greater number. But socialism means something more and else than this.

What it asks is not so much State help as State transformation. The help is conceded when good cause is shown. But there is a great gulf fixed between carefully considered State action in supplement of the endeavours of the community for purposes the carrying out of which implies a monopoly of means, or which cannot be done or so well done except through such action, and that which socialism in its more crystallised form contemplates.

What, then, does it contemplate? in other words, What is socialism?

CHAPTER XI.

THE POSITIONS OF SOCIALISM.

Socialism is one of those indefinite terms under which many theories, differing from each other at many points but united by a common idea, are comprehended. "The societies," writes Mr W. R. Greg, "have assumed every possible variety of form. We have had republican societies like Plato's, Fourier's, and Babœuf's; hierarchical and aristocratic like Simon's; theocratic like the Essenes; despotic like that of the old Peruvians, and that of the Jesuits in Paraguay; polygamists like the Mormons. Some have been based on purely material principles like Mr Owen's; some have been profoundly spiritual and religious like the Moravians; some maintain the family arrangements, some altogether merge them; some recommend celibacy as the Essenes, some enforce it as the Shakers. Some, like the Owenites, relax the marriage tie; some, like the Harmonists, control

it; some, like the Moravians, hold it sacred and indissoluble; others again, like Plato and the Anabaptists of Munster, advocate a community of women. Some would divide the wealth of the society equally among all the members; some, as Fourier, unequally. But one great idea pervades them all — community of property, more or less complete and unreserved. Common labour for the common good." [1]

Modern socialism—that with which we are now concerned—includes this idea but adds to it, and only in the addition do we find its distinctive platform. There are points at which it appeals to thoughtful and earnest minds. It interprets an ideal of life which interests those who are in sympathy with the spiritual-social sides of Christianity. It interprets an ideal of Government which some who long for a more rapid initiative, and a more effectual action for the public weal, are disposed to hail. It interprets an economic ideal in which not only labour leagues and leaders discern social salvation, but which attracts the attention of many who regard political economy, as hitherto expounded, as "the dismal science." Thus it attracts many, who have yet no fellowship with its ulterior aims, with some of

[1] Mistaken Aims and Unattainable Ideals of the Artizan Class, pp. 192, 193.

its cardinal principles, and with the methods by which it proposes to apply its principles and carry out its aims.

The late Bishop of Durham, Dr Westcott, is an illustration. To him the attraction was the theory of life. Individualism denotes competition; the method of socialism is co-operation. The one looks on man as working against man for private gain; the other looks on man as working with man for a common end. The one aims at the attainment of some personal advantage either of place or of fame; the other aims at the fulfilment of service. Hence the preference of the saintly bishop. He protested against the idea of "humanity as made up of disconnected or jarring atoms"; he looked on humanity "as an organic whole, a vital unity formed by the combination of contributory members mutually interdependent." The economic aspect of socialism he let alone; the humanitarian aspect which it incorporates secured his suffrage.[1] And in this he exemplifies the attitude assumed by a large number of earnest minds which are permeated by the Christian law of ministry, binding men by love to serve one another. But the system or the variety of systems that we differentiate as socialistic is political and economical. The ques-

[1] The Incarnation and Common Life.

tion to which it supplies an answer is, How by State or collective organisation may this law of ministry be rendered binding on men and universal? how is competition to be abolished? and how, by the supremacy of co-operation, are the evils ascribed to competition to be eradicated?

The expositions of this answer are numerous. Some are so vague that for the purpose of definition they are useless; some are so loose that they are not self-consistent. Of this sort are such statements as that socialism means nothing else than "the betterment of society";[1] or, again, that it means "every tendency which demands any kind of subordination of the individual will to the community."[2] These, and many similar statements, explain nothing. They do not announce the characteristic positions of socialism. To ascertain them, we must turn to more fully formulated and authoritative pronouncements; and we may select Dr Schäffle in his 'Quintessence of Socialism' as perhaps the most moderate and "business-like" of all. The book has this feature, that, whilst it clearly indicates the lines of the proposed action, and is sympathetic with them, it is fully aware of the difficulties attend-

[1] Kaufman, in 'Subjects of the Day,' No. 2.

[2] Held, Sozialismus, &c., p. 29.

ing their adoption. In a later work, the author declares the socialistic democracy impossible.[1]

"The Alpha and Omega of socialism," Dr Schäffle asserts, "is the transformation of private and competing capitals into a united collective capital."[2] The goal contemplated is, "No capitalists and no wage-earners, but all alike producers"; for, "instead of the system of private and competing capitals which drive down wages by competition, there shall be a collective ownership of capital, public organisation of labour and of the distribution of the national income."[3] "The State is to collect, warehouse, and transport all products, and finally to distribute them to individuals in proportion to the registered

[1] "The freedom of the individual would lose in a degree which democracy would by no means tolerate. Popular government very easily degenerates into mob-rule, and this is always more favourable to the common and the insignificant than to the noble and distinguished. Hence democratic Collectivism itself would be likely to wound in a high degree the most sensitive self-respect, without leaving as much freedom as does the present system of private service in the choice of employment and employer, or of a place of abode. Its only equality would be that no one was in anywise independent, but all slaves of the majority, and on this point again democratic Collectivism would come to grief and utterly fail to keep the promises it makes to the better class of working men whose self-respect is injured by the existing state of things."—The Impossibility of Social Democracy, p. 95.

[2] Quintessence, p. 20 (English translation).

[3] Ibid., p. 28.

amount of social labour, and according to a valuation of commodities exactly corresponding to their average cost of production."[1] "All incomes are equally to represent a share in the national produce allotted directly by the community in proportion to the work done—that is, exclusive returns to labour."[2] This is set forth as the quintessence. We are called to set aside all other issues, other points which are often tagged into theories; and, as the one vital matter, to fasten on the abolition of private ownership of all instruments of production (land, factories, machines, tools, &c.), so that all producers will individually be no more than workmen, working with the instruments of production common to all."[3]

Thus far Dr Schäffle. With his view popular representations coincide. The programme of socialism is explained in a leaflet of the Fabian Society to "consist essentially of one demand, that the land and other instruments of production shall be the common property of the people, and shall be used and governed by the people for the people." For this, as "his fundamental principle," to be carried to "its utmost limits," Karl Marx contended. Individual landowners and capitalists of every sort are to be expro-

[1] Quintessence, p. 45. [2] Ibid., p. 9. [3] Ibid., pp. 7, 8.

priated, and the whole means of the nation are to be held by the community, in order that distribution according to need or labour may be made to all labourers. No profits and no wages, for all are to be sharers in a common good. No masters and no servants, for all are to be servants of the one master, the community, getting the full value of their labour in production. Rewards may be given to special intelligence or service; but the honoraria are to be determined by the community. The State—that is, "the proletariat itself organised as a governing body"—is to be the one and only proprietor, the one and only capitalist, the one and only paymaster; the possessor and distributer of the entire wealth; the universal providence as well as executive. Such is the new economy whose triumph is the hope, the "Christ that is to be," of Socialism.

To the economic constitution of society, then, we must address ourselves. There are many beautiful and interesting aspects in the environment of socialism, and generous or ardent natures, interested by these aspects, are apt to extend their sympathies to the system itself. But in order to know what it is, what it proposes, whither it leads, we must concentrate attention on the economic aspect. If it pro-

poses to bring in a millennium for the toiling millions, it proposes to do this by a revolution in respect of the fundamental conceptions and constitutive principles of society; and the canons and aims of this revolution it is necessary to sift. It would take us too far afield to criticise all the positions that are taken. But some of the difficulties that compel an attitude of scepticism, and sometimes of opposition, it seems incumbent to state.

I.

"The labour question," writes Professor Flint, "is the distinctively burning question of the Europe of to-day, as the religious question was of the Europe of the Reformation period, or the political question of the Europe of the Revolution epoch."[1] Now, it is on the relation of labour to wealth, on the rights of the labourer, on the organisation of labour, that socialism lays stress. It is essentially a scheme to make labour the one, the all-dominating fact—the measure of all value, the reference of all government, the basis of the entire social structure.

The fundamental principle of the structure

[1] Socialism, p. 104.

which it would rear is the assertion of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and other economists, that "labour is the source of all wealth"—one of those assertions which, when duly guarded and balanced, express a truth, but which, when not thus balanced, are misleading and become untrue. Exception may be taken to the phraseology. However regarded, labour is rather the *conditio sine quâ non* than the source of wealth. It does not originate; it operates on material supplied or available, and, utilising this material, realises a value. Without labour, there cannot be possession; but possession would be impossible unless, independently of labour, there were a substance to be converted into use. We command nature by obeying it. No force benefits us unless we serve it; and such service or obedience, through the exercise of patience, skill, industry, is the condition of appropriating—not of creating—the wealth. As thus understood, it is in a sense true that there is no actual value without labour. But when we say this, it must be remembered that the term labour includes many kinds of service—includes, indeed, all volitions, all acts of thought, all forth-putting of energy, all that brain and hand find to do. Now, it is here that we discern the socialistic misuse of the formula. The formula is practi-

cally limited to one species of labour—manual. Marx looks on that as "the one uniform labour power"[1] which makes value. Instead of comprehending the total of labourers, intellectual as well as industrial, only the industrial are in the purview, and the changes are ever rung on the note that their toil towards production is the sole source of all the wealth in production. This is utterly erroneous. The labourer cannot produce without his instruments, without the machinery by means of which he acts. But the instruments, the machinery, represent money which the labourer has not; they also imply research, knowledge, inventive genius in which the labourer has no share. Moreover, the plan which the labourer works out, the conduct of the business with which he is associated, the finding of the market for goods produced, the manifold dealing with commodities so that they may be exchanged, all that makes the work successful and profitable,—these are essential to the wealth, and have a right to be reckoned as contributing to it.

To measure value by manual toil, to place this toil in the seat of authority, is surely to contract the horizons of life, and to set up an

[1] Capital, p. 12. "For simplicity's sake we shall henceforth account every kind of labour to be unskilled, simple labour."

irrational touchstone of worth. But what is the test imposed by Marx? He takes "simple, unskilled labour as the standard of all labour." And he adds, "The value of the most skilled work, by equating it to the product of simple, unskilled labour, represents a definite quantity of the latter alone."[1] Is this tenable? Is it not absurd, all but incomprehensible? Quantity of labour supreme over quality of labour! There is no equation by which the worth of a sculptor's work can be equalised to the product of a hodman's. The ten hours of the hodman and the ten hours of the sculptor are the same in respect of duration, but they are utterly different in respect of the kind of work done, of the amount of intellectual, artistic, emotional brain-effort put into them; and yet we are told that the value of the sculptor's work represents a definite quantity of the hodman's. "As values"—such is the generalisation—"all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour-time."[2] Over its theories of value, and the determinants of value, socialism becomes confused: it is frequently befogged; and, in magnifying manual labour, it belittles other forms of service. Even Dr Schäffle describes "judges, administrative officials, teachers, artists,

[1] Capital, vol. i. p. 12. [2] Capital, pp. 5, 6.

scientific investigators," as yielding services of general utility, but, inasmuch as "they are not employed in the social circulation of material," they are regarded as "not immediately productive workers." And he would assign them a share in the commodities produced by the national labour "proportioned only to the time spent by them in useful work."[1] This labour-time is the exclusive reference: the labour which produces material commodities is emphasised as the only source of the national wealth. To many, this apprehension must appear narrow, unjust, even false.

The sceptical attitude assumed towards it may be extended to the demand of socialism, that "the labourer is entitled to the whole produce of his labour." Those who make this demand are by no means agreed as to details. It is one thing in the mouth of a Russian nihilist, another thing in the mouth of a French peasant-proprietor, another thing still in the mouth of the English socialist. Let us appeal to Karl Marx as the most consistent and thorough expounder of its significance. Value, he insists, is created by the power of labour. The possessor of this power—*i.e.*, the labourer—sells it as a commodity at so much per day. This is his day's wage. But in

[1] Quintessence, pp. 8, 9.

his toil through the working day he creates a value far in excess of that which he receives—a surplus value which is appropriated by the capitalist. The contention is that he is entitled to the whole value—the surplus as well as the wage. There are subtleties in the argument on the subject of value on which it is unnecessary to dwell. It is sufficient to recall the point already referred to, that, in the view of the socialistic economist, value is essentially time of labour, with two conditions annexed: one, that the article produced must be socially useful; and the other, that the time whose entire produce the workman is to receive must be limited by his capacity of endurance, and by the consideration of the necessities of rest and leisure in order that body and mind may be sustained in full vigour. Making allowance for these requirements, it is maintained that the entire result of the whole day's toil—not the wage only, but the surplus which now goes to the employer—is rightfully the labourer's. And in so far as he is not obtaining it, he is held to be robbed by society.[1]

Now, in all the reasoning by which this is enforced, we observe the confusion previously

[1] The latter parts of vol. i. and vol. ii. of 'Capital' elaborate the position stated.

traced. In the production of exchangeable or of useful things, is the labourer to be regarded as only the person who receives the wage, whose time is purchased for the production? A capitalist is generally regarded as one who advances money and awaits the receipt of "usury" or of interest for the money; but, as has been shown, he may be, and very often is, the hardest labourer of all — designing patterns or plans, financing, watching, and taking advantage of changes in style, fashion, or in processes of industry, conducting a business larger or smaller. He may have too much—that is another matter; but is he not also a labourer entitled to the value which his time and energy create? The reply of course will be, that the individual capitalist, as distinguished from the individual labourer, is to be abolished; that there are to be no wages and no profits, since all are to be sharers in the total profit, each according to his labour. But, under any conceivable arrangement, must there not be some party holding the two halves of the scissors? some agency—indeed a vastly multiplied agency—to guide, to inspect, to order, to keep books, to be captains, lieutenants, scribes of industry? The time of this agency is not making production of commodities, but it has its value. Those employed in it are not "labourers" in the restricted

acceptation of the term, but they must be paid for their service, and for this payment deductions must be made from the labourer's produce, in contravention of the principle that the labourer is entitled to the total produce of his labour. Further, if there is no single production that does not involve the labour of many workers, and workers of many sorts, how is this variety of service essential to the value of any commodity to be recognised? If in the measure in which industry is skilled, no particular product can be regarded as the result of the toil of one workman, how is it possible to fix what is the whole produce to which every labourer is entitled? The claim is beset with difficulties. A Fabian essayist has endeavoured to cut the knot by saying that "the only truly socialistic scheme will absolutely abolish all economic distinctions, and establish the impossibility of their again arising, by making an equal provision for the maintenance of all an indefeasible condition of citizenship without any regard whatever to the relative specific services of different citizens." Then, it may safely be said that "the only truly socialistic scheme" attempts the impossible; and that if, in its idea and aim, socialism is interpreted by such a scheme, the part which it prescribes for itself is a constant ploughing of the sands.

That the labourer has an absolute right to all the produce of his labour is not evident, unless by the labourer is understood every one who by brain, intelligence, money, or manual service contributes to the result. But we can all urge that the labourer, in the restricted acceptation of the term, is entitled to an equitable proportion. It is the business of the State to see that the conditions of contracting for his labour are righteous, to protect him against being defrauded, to put him in the way of realising a fair value for himself, whilst he is creating value for society. Where the intervention of the State is required to free industry, or to guard the workman and give him full play for his energy and for larger amounts of happiness, there is the call for the application of its powers. But every demand needs to be carefully scrutinised, and, in the interests both of the individual and of the community, doubtful claims need to be challenged.

II.

The grudge of the more advanced expressions of socialism against property in land is keen and bitter. "Private property is theft," said Proudhon; and his saying is one of the funda-

mental principles of the new economy. The land, with all its potentialities, is held to belong to the people. Nothing, it is urged, can be called property that is not the fruit of labour; and land is not the fruit of labour, but the gift of God intended for all alike.[1] No person, therefore, has a right to the exclusive tenure of any portion of it. "To the landed estates of the Duke of Westminster," exclaimed Mr George, "the poorest child that is born in London to-day has as much right as his eldest son."[2]

Now, with regard to this contention two points may be made. First, is the distinction between land and other material — viz., that the one is God's gift to all, and consequently is not to be called property; and the other, being the fruit of labour, is not gift but property—justified by common-sense? The soil, indeed, is a gift of the Creator to man. But the same may be said of all on which man operates; and the condition on which the soil becomes a source of wealth is identical with that on which anything else becomes a source of wealth—that is, the labour of man. The Indian tribes which roamed

[1] This is the contention of Henry George in 'Progress and Poverty.'

[2] Quoted in 'Contemporary Socialism,' p. 489.

through the forests of America, and the Australian aborigines who reared their rude tents in the bush, saw the land, trode it, slept on it; but it yielded them no wealth, except that which was realised by produce on which they bestowed no labour, and by the use of bow and arrow. There was no value in it for them, because the gift of God did not, by labour, become property. If labour is essential to the utilisation of the gift, then, accepting the definition given, the question of property in land comes immediately into view. No abstract conception of the land as belonging to all alike can bar the right to possess the fruits of the portion of land which one man or one family cultivates. But, second, in respect of this right, does not the Christian ethicist maintain that no one has an absolute and unchallengeable tenure of any good? Property has been defined as "the right to use and to abuse."[1] "A claim," observes Herbert Spencer, "to private property in land involves a landowning despotism." And the case he puts is, "It would be proper for the sole proprietor of any kingdom—a Jersey or Guernsey, for example—to impose just what regulations he might choose on its inhabitants, to tell them that they should not live on his

[1] M. Proudhon.

property unless they professed a certain religion, spoke a particular language, paid him a specified reverence, adopted an authorised dress, and conformed to all other conditions he might see fit to make."[1] Now, there is no need to deal with an assertion so extravagant. It is not within the range of practical politics. But one who looks forth on society in the mind of Christ rejects the idea of an "unlimited despotism." He holds that any and every tenure are from the righteous God, and that to Him and His righteousness all are responsible for its occupancy. None have such a right to it as to have the right to abuse it. If a landlord abuses his possession, if, under his custody, it becomes a loss instead of a gain to the nation, he is guilty of a malversation for which he must answer to the Judge of all the earth, and of a wrong to society for which society may call him to account. Rights are balanced by duties; they cease, in moral equity at least, to be rights when the duties are neglected, and beyond a certain point—that at which flagrant derelictions and injustices can be proved—the nation, through its executive, the State, may and should demand a reckoning. Parliament has restricted the "despotism" of the landlord,

[1] Social Statics, chap. ix.

so that his supposed rights may not interfere with public utilities.

When we inquire into socialistic schemes as to the land, we find a variety, even a conflict, of ideas. Some would abolish both ownership and occupation, and leave the cultivation of the soil to local communes. Some would infeft all citizens into occupation, and oblige the able-bodied to work in the production of the fruits of the earth. Some would parochialise all the land of the nation, "so that there shall be no more nor other landlords in the whole country than the parishes, and each of them be sovereign landlord in its own territory."[1] Some — and these the theories which are in vogue — would nationalise all the land and make the State the sole landlord. From all such proposals the plan, urged with great eloquence by Mr George, but now discarded, differs, in that, whilst abolishing individual ownership, it allowed individual occupancy, and, in lieu of rent to the owner, it substituted the whole burden of taxation. His "simple yet sovereign remedy was to appropriate rent by taxation."[2] Diverse, however, as the remedies for the alleged existing injustice

[1] Lecture of Thomas Spence, with introduction by H. M. Hyndman. London, 1882.

[2] Progress and Poverty, p. 288.

are, the conception which underlies all is that the land is "the inalienable birthright of every person born on it," that of this birthright millions are deprived, and that the land-laws need to be thoroughly reformed in the interests of the whole nation — the proprietor-class abolished, rents in their present form swept away, and all land worked on the principle of co-operation, each worker receiving according to his labour-time.

Now, behind all the inflated language of orator and essayist in support of this thesis there is a truth. Originally, and theoretically still, the State—the tribe or nation in its official representative—is the first owner of the land. In earlier times, it gave estates to persons on condition of the discharge of feudal offices and obligations. When the offices and obligations ceased, the estates remained. No one will assert that ownership of land in this country is an ideal system. But three positions may be maintained. First, that there is no absolute injustice in the confirmation by the State of the title of an individual to reap the benefits of his expenditure and diligence on a portion of the soil. All cannot have an equal right to every portion of the land; there must be limitation, and the limitation protected by law is really property. Second, that

this limitation or individualising of property is, and has always been, an accompaniment of civilisation. In the far past, there was a collective ownership, and the soil was poorly cultivated. The expansion of agriculture was introduced by allocations of land to individuals, giving them scope for energy and enterprise. And, third, that with reference to the existing order, the ramifications of property are so wide and intricate, social life is in so many ways mixed up with it, it touches such a variety of interests at so many points, that wise men cannot but shrink from such drastic measures as socialism proposes. There are other processes which may be trusted for the rectification of much that is socially hurtful. The legal transference of land has been greatly facilitated; the effect of primogeniture has been greatly modified; and last, not least, the accumulation of burdens on estates whose reduced rentals cannot bear it, the pressures of population making the breaking up of parks, policies, and estates both profitable for the owner and necessary for the community, — these drifts and tendencies are, with ever-accelerating speed, distributing the possession of the soil over widening areas of population. It is better, surely, to rely on an inevitable development of influences actively at work, than to contemplate spoliations which can

be made effectual only through fierce conflict and social revolution.

Many theories that catch the ear of multitudes break down when their practicability is considered. It is so with socialistic theories as to the nationalisation of land. To begin with, the soil represents only a limited territory, and, however greatly they may be increased, limited capacities of production. The arable acreage is constantly shrinking in extent, in consequence of the growth and diffusion of the urban population, and the spread of industries of many kinds. Allowing for the utilisation of policies around castles and mansions, and of deer-forests (many of which must always remain barren), there is not, and cannot be, a competence of support for more than fractions of the landless millions. Then, to provide for these fractions, how is the State or the local community to acquire the land? Are the individual owners to receive compensation, or are their estates to be confiscated? Dr Schäffle would compensate, but the compensation must be in the form of consumable goods, bestowed for a period longer or shorter.[1] What goods? In what proportion to land-values? If a fair price in current money may be given, how enormous would be the amount required! In order to pay the debt

[1] Quintessence of Socialism, p. 32.

thus contracted, to meet taxation, cost of cultivation, superintendence, &c., what vast sums would require to be raised! The burden would be heavier than any existing rents. But it is confiscation, not compensation or purchase, that is aimed at. J. S. Mill proposed that only "the portion of the future increase of rent not due to the expenditure of labour and capital on the soil should be intercepted."[1] This will not satisfy. The landlord is to be expropriated. The socialised State is to take the rent, the whole rent, the land and all its value. And, in doing so, the claim is that there is no robbery of persons, that the nation is only reclaiming its own for national use. How, finally, is the omnipotent State to distribute the wealth in land so that by labour it may be realised? It cannot give new possessions; it cannot allow any one to say of even a few acres, "These are mine"; for, small landlordisms as well as great are an offence against the fundamental principle. Are there to be farms, and these to be let by auction as some suggest? But this means competition, and competition is to be eliminated. Is the farming to be conducted in the name of the community — overseers, book-keepers, stewards, and others necessary to the carrying on of business to be remunerated out of the gains? But

[1] Quoted in 'Contemporary Socialism,' p. 491.

what, then, of the right of the labourer to the whole of his produce? According to any method, the practical difficulties are formidable; and, whatever the method that may be adopted, a huge State machinery is necessitated, offering huge opportunities for all the evils of a widespread officialism. Joseph, we are told, bought up the soil of Egypt for Pharaoh, so that the people were reduced to a state of servitude. If the socialist programme could be carried out, is it not possible that a Pharaoh might be summoned into existence, all the more oppressive because the despotism is that of democracy?

III.

It is with capital—meaning by this the wealth that is bestowed on production, as distinguished from that which is spent on consumable goods or on self—that the quarrel of the socialist is most intense. He is the champion of labour as against capital. That there should be an *against*, that there should be antagonism between the two economic factors, each of which is essential to the other, is to be deeply deplored. Many who cannot accept the positions of socialism recognise in the socialistic trend of feeling

a revolt against the selfishness that capitalists have too often manifested. But reason must keep a naturally aroused protest in hand, and some reflections bid us think, not once or twice but oftener still, before we commit ourselves to the extreme views that are persistently advocated.

In the first place, there are capitalists and capitalists. If cases of heartless indifference to "hands" can be cited, other instances of just dealing, of actions that prove a genuine desire to promote the wellbeing of workmen and their families, can also be cited. Under any system, however perfect, there will be grasping and greed. Is it supposed that these will disappear in the working-class State? Some who are always beholding and denouncing the mote in the capitalist's eye may well ask if there is no beam in their own eye.

Further, all capitalists are not millionaires. The catch-cry of demagogues is that society consists of a few millionaires and a multitude of beggars.[1] There are too many beggars; but will any sane person, looking around, maintain that, apart from those who have great wealth, the noticeable thing is beggary? There are millionaires; possibly—few though they may be

[1] So Marx in his 'Das Kapital.'

relatively—there are too many. But, as compared with the mass of capitalists, they form a very small percentage. They are on the highest summits of an indefinitely graded system, summits which, for the most part, they gained, not by mere luck, but by the strenuous application of remarkable powers, illustrating in a conspicuous manner the qualities that can ensure competencies for many of all sorts and conditions. But every person who has any money, however small the sum, which he invests in, or utilises for, business; the smallest master—the one, say, who can buy some tools and leather and cobble shoes in his own house, or the jobbing gardener who buys his hoe and rake and barrows that he may dress gardens, or the widow who invests in some toys and confections with a view to sale—is a capitalist. The possibility of using the little as well as the much for production, and the freedom to develop all the ingenuity and improve all the opportunity of the individual, have been hitherto accepted as among the things to be contemplated towards the promotion of the greater happiness of the greater number.

Increase of opportunity for the labourer is the desideratum. An exploited person is one who works for an end in whose good he has no part. The exploitation of the worker is reduced in the

measure in which facilities are provided for giving him a share beyond the mere living wage in the fruits of production, and associating him with the business which he serves. Undoubtedly, there are difficulties in the way of realising such facilities. Payment of labour by means of shares that shall represent the value of the labour, with a percentage proportioned to personal merit and to the success of the firm, is advocated by many who do not accept the socialists' platform. And there is much to be said in its favour. It has been to some extent tried and not found wanting in America. Bonuses, regulated in amount by the prosperity of the trade, by the output and profit of the works, have been set apart for the labourer, making him thus a partner in the prosperity. It should not pass the wit of man to discover methods by which this system might be extended. Still, it must be recollected that there are fluctuations in every department of production; there are acute crises; there are years in which an industry is carried on at a loss, instead of a gain. It is only the command of money that in these circumstances enables the capitalist to keep his machinery in operation, and to wait in the hope of a brighter day. The worker who has no money cannot afford to wait. The fair day's wage is his security, and the expectation of percentages,

in addition to the wage, might give rise to pressures and frictions that would be disastrous in periods when trade was depressed and profits were nil.

What is needed above all things is straight open dealing between master and men. It is the want of this frankness that has been the occasion of much of the heart-burning that feeds socialistic agitation. In seasons of brisk and profitable trade, employers have not, in advance of all solicitation, taken the labourer into account and accorded him a larger measure of good as his due. Business, we are told, is business; the law of supply and demand, in wages as in all commodities, works automatically, and there must be no interference with it. But, to distribute the wealth which great turns-over secure, so that all may have a portion, is no interference with this law; it only marks obedience to the law which should be supreme in a Christian community — the law of justice. "As ye would that men should do to you do ye also to them likewise."

The rapid development of industries has newmade the conditions of social life, and has introduced features that are changing the relations between the chiefs and the rank and file of the industrial army. The personal element is a

diminishing quantity. Formerly, the chiefs were individuals by whose direct initiative and under whose immediate control all was begun, continued, and ended, and who, when they were high-minded and generous, took an interest in their workers and their families, and recognised their responsibility for the good of their people. This is disappearing. Firms are converted into trusts or limited liability companies; syndicates rule markets; and trusts, companies, syndicates, as such, have no conscience, sympathy, or responsibility. All with which they intromit relates to business alone. The human is sacrificed to the commercial. In the factory or workshop, there is the *boss*, and there is the *hand;* in the counting-house there is the manager or director. And one result of the trades-union is a further elimination of the personal. Wages are fixed by collective rather than individual contract. The union prescribes the number of apprentices, marks off the domain within which its members must work and the amount of work to be done; in various ways limiting production. It has as its last word the strike; and, consequent on the strike, the picketing and boycotting of non-union men. Economists assert that, in its action and in its results, the union is mischievous. We do not

need to discuss the matter, for, the union is; and it has come to stay. Whether or not it prevents the easy adjustment of the balance of supply and demand, it has, beyond doubt, materially altered the industrial situation. Two things only may be urged. The one is, that if it would enlist the full sympathy and gain the full confidence of the community, it must not cross the frontier between a compact discipline and a tyranny of terror. And the other is, that whilst class unions may be needful, the aim of both employers and employed should be to avert conflict by taking occasion by the hand. The deplorable, disastrous, strike should be all but impossible. Surely there is a more excellent way of arbitration, in the event of dispute or misunderstanding, by which causes of antagonism may be removed.

But there is only one way, the socialist interjects. The evils of capitalism, whether its representatives be the individual plutocrat or the trust, cannot be mended. The only cure is to end the capitalist. The capital means rent, interest, or usury, and these are banned. The capitalist, above all things, means competition, and competition is stigmatised as "one of the curses of civilisation which must

be got rid of before substantial progress is possible."[1]

What, then, is to be substituted for this curse of civilisation, which is inseparable from capitalism? and how is the substitute to be made effective as a remedy for existing miseries and injustices?

Emulation is presented as the substitute. In the words of Professor Lodge, emulation is "the aspiration of a soldier to lead a forlorn-hope, the desire of a student to make a discovery, the ambition of a merchant to develop a new country or establish a new route. Competition is the snarling of dogs over the same bone. Emulation is the desire to do a thing better than it has been done by others. Competition is the desire to do instead of others that which is equally well done by them."[2] There is much that appeals to soul and conscience in this contrast. The constant struggle of one man to outbid another is tiresome, often revolting. It is responsible for wares "cheap and nasty," for tricks and dishonesties in trade, for lying advertisements, for sweaters' dens, for scamped work. It thrusts the old aside and ruthlessly bids the more unfit drop behind. It

[1] Liverpool Fabian Tracts, No. 3 [2] Ibid.

tends "to divert energies into useless channels and to degrade the character, while for the unsuccessful it makes life impossible, and for the average man it makes life a severe strain."[1] To displace this hydra by a nobler spring of action is a worthy aim.

But we must be sure of our ground; we must look at human nature as it is, and at the facts of life as they are. The picture of Professor Lodge is too roseate. The line between emulation and competition is a thin line. Emulation denotes the heroic; but the heroic is far from being prevalent. Soldiers do aspire to lead forlorn-hopes, but all soldiers do not; and the average soldier, whilst doing his duty, is not insensible to personal distinctions. Students do desire to make discoveries for the promotion of science and the good of humanity; but the average student is by no means indifferent to success in the prizes of the career he has selected. Merchants have occasionally the ambition to develop a new country or establish a new route, but the average merchant contemplates a market for goods and a personal gain. The feathers of emulation may be of yellow gold, but they are always dipping into the pots of competition. For, indeed, self-love

[1] Liverpool Fabian Tracts, No. 3.

is a strong and persistent force in the nature of man. The altruism which denies and represses it, marks an effort to

> "wind ourselves too high
> For mortal man beneath the sky."

Self-love cannot, and should not, be scouted as if it were an unclean thing. It should be controlled and balanced by an unselfish love—the love of the neighbour as the love of the self. No matter what the circumstances may be, the danger of self-pushing—in other words, of competition—will appear. Is it to be supposed that there would be no pushing, no competition, in a working-class State and community? The old Adam will prove too strong for any young Melanchthon.

There is no good around which evils do not grow. We must set the good against the evils, and, in following the one, take the risk of the others. Liberty, scope for individual energy, is a good not to be bartered away for a universal servitude. We must look to pressures of public sentiment, to the spread of enlightenment, to better organisation, to the power of religion, to detach labour from the excesses and extravagances of unhealthy competitions.

Now, the method by which it is proposed to

give effect to the emulative rather than the competitive element is co-operation; and this is a word which signifies a great Christian principle.

We have seen that on this principle the Church of Christ is built up. That we are members one of another, that each member is bound to care for the others, that the social organism is in its entirety to minister to every constituent, and that every constituent is to supply vital force to the organism, are postulates of Christianity. There is, therefore, a welcome waiting for the extension of the idea of co-operation—an idea with which is connected the harmonious development of happy and healthy life.

Social co-operation has two sides—production and distribution. The data relating to the one side are not sufficient to warrant generalisations; for, whilst experiments—some successful and some unsuccessful—have been made, they have been as yet on a very limited scale. But, in distribution, the success has been conspicuous. In 1862, the sales of co-operative societies in the United Kingdom did not amount to two and a half millions sterling; in 1900, they amounted to more than seventy-seven millions sterling, and the profits, by which nearly two millions of members were benefited, were between eight and nine

millions sterling.[1] Here there is "an automatic system of self-help" which commends itself to the favour of all who desire to uplift the poor and oppressed. Let it be remembered that the results recorded have been accomplished by voluntary effort. The societies have won their victory by competition, by the good work they have done, by the good commodities which they have sold, by the steady growth of confidence in their objects and in their management. Their expansion illustrates the possibilities of a vigorous social collectivism, which, without attempting to repress competition, offers a higher mark and level, and, through the development of opinion

[1] The report submitted to the Co-operative Congress at Middleborough on May 27 is most satisfactory, as is evident from the figures presented. In 1899 the number of members in Great Britain and Ireland was 1,729,976; in 1900 it was 1,827,653. In the 'Spectator' of June 1 it is said: "A satisfactory state of affairs prevails in the productive societies, though room for expansion exists in this department. The report on co-operative agriculture is less satisfactory, as, from various causes, the agriculturists of the country seem to be much slower to recognise the benefits of co-operative action than are those in Ireland. The figures with regard to co-operative credit banks, again, show that Ireland leads the way with a membership of 2943 and a capital of £5679, as against a membership of 1330 and a capital of £4859 for England and Scotland combined. It is stated, however, that the benefits of these banks, the members of which are working men and women of various occupations, are now being more and more appreciated."

in regard to it, and of facilities for realising it, restrains the excesses of the competing spirit within the channels of a healthy energy.

But socialism looks to co-operation, not as a rule voluntarily accepted and supported by the choice of free men, but as the compulsory method by which all labour is to be done, and all gain for the State and the individual unit is to be reaped. It is the agency of the one capitalist, the State, in all kinds of production — mills, factories, foundries, ironworks, coal-mines, &c. All instruments, tools, machinery, are to be the property of the collective capitalist, which shall divide to every man according as he labours. None are to compete, all are to serve. None are to be waged; for, wages imply contracts for labour, and such contracts are to be abolished. Each is to have what is allotted to him as the value of his produce. "Compulsory minima" may be supplemented by "honorific inducements," but any wealth granted must be spent only on consumable things. Is it too much to affirm that the scheme carried consistently out to its utmost limits is impossible? If it were possible, the experience of great systems which are monopolies suggests that there would be a lack in initiative, in readiness to adopt improvements involving departures from rules and ways

that have been fixed. To all State action a "circumlocution office" is attached, and, in every department, workers accustomed to arrangements with which they are familiar might interpose obstacles to new modes and machineries; and would they not have a right to do so? How are social labours and values to be estimated? Dr Schäffle pertinently asks, "Whether the common wealth of the socialists would be able to cope with the enormous socialistic book-keeping, and to estimate correctly heterogeneous labour according to socialistic units of labour-time?"[1] And, after all, a civilisation, such as that of the twentieth century, has a wealth and a variety of which socialism takes little account, and which a proletariat State, with a vulture-like eye to material good, might omit from its purview, "reducing the colours of life in number and robbing them of their vividness." It is said that new forces will be called out and new potencies will be operative. Some, in their scepticism, may be disposed to return Hotspur's answer to the boast of Glendower—

> "'I can call spirits from the vasty deep.'
> 'Why, so can I, or so can any man;
> But will they come when you do call for them?'"

[1] Quintessence, p. 70.

CHAPTER XII.

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF SOCIALISM.

THE criticism to which the previous chapter was devoted indicates the grounds on which assent is withheld from the economic positions of socialism. The judgment condemns these as unsound and impracticable, even though the mind is sympathetic with the endeavour to elevate the permanent conditions of the toiling masses, and though it recognises many elements of truth in the ideal of society and of the State. But from the Christian standpoint the outlook is wider than that of economics. The contention of some is, that the question at issue should not be complicated by a reference to moral and religious interests, that the purview of socialism does not extend beyond the range of politics, and that only as a social-political system should it be considered and tested. This contention will not hold. The political and the ethical cannot be put asunder. Any and every constitution of

society must affect the character of those whom it includes; it must influence the "conduct, which is three-fourths of life." To say of a social adjustment that it is non-moral, is to condemn it as anti-moral. Moreover, the claim of the socialist is that the polity which he proposes is his morality.[1] He professes to find in it all that enters into the content of justice, of righteousness, of the brotherhood of men, and all that is efficient in the way of motive. It is, therefore, strictly relevant to the matter in hand, as it is necessary to the determination of the attitude and duty of the Church, to consider the consequences of the persistent socialistic propagandism by which we are confronted, and the moral and religious bearing of the theories which this propagandism emphasises as the only solution of the problems of poverty and labour.

None can be conversant with the feeling which is reflected in papers, tracts, and treatises that are largely circulated, and none can mingle, with some freedom, among the working classes in our cities without observing, within the last twenty-five years, an increasing, a more openly expressed, spirit of discontent. Take up "a new age" journal, or

1 "The polity of the socialist is his morality, and his reasoned morality may, in the old sense of the word, be termed his religion." —The Ethic of Free Thought, p. 319.

listen to the conversation or the oratory of those whom such a journal represents. The reiteration is, of wrongs inflicted by capital and capitalists; of injustices of taxation, rent, administration; of rotten conditions to which are due the poverty, the exploitation of the many and the enrichment of the few; of long labour-time and hard labour-lot; of the heartlessness of the rich, the pride of the privileged, the worldliness of Churches and of clergy; of the need of revolution to set things right and to enforce the demands of the labourer; of the golden time that will come when the transformations, the expropriations, and the appropriations of socialism are realised. Sometimes the language is that of thoughtfulness and earnestness; sometimes it is that which, without reflection, repeats catch-words learned at second-hand; sometimes it is that of the frivolous, if not the corrupt, mind: but it passes to and fro, and produces stir, ferment, bitterness of feeling. It may be said that this is true of only a fraction of the labouring class, or of any class. Perhaps so; but the fraction is neither inconsiderable nor uninfluential. It is larger than many suppose. It has always some facts by which to support its assertions. It possesses the faculty of diffusion which attaches to strong opinions strongly uttered.

A contributory cause, and a conspicuous element, of this disaffection may be noticed.

Socialism has an international propaganda. Its boast is that it is emancipated from the limitations of country, that its cause is the common cause of the proletariat everywhere. Through its clubs, its associations, and its publications; by means of the focussing of all shades of opinion in London—the aroma of Continental and American sentiment is communicated to the agitation in Great Britain. Now, though the extreme views advocated elsewhere have no vogue in this country, a certain influence is communicated through them. The anarchism which is in evidence in Germany has not many avowed supporters, but thought is coloured by the idea of anarchy, as interpreted by Proudhon in the sentences, "That the political function be reabsorbed in the industrial. Thus social order will ensue spontaneously out of the simple operation of transactions and exchanges. Every man might then be called autocrat of himself, which is the extreme reverse of monarchical absolutism." [1] Michael Bakunin is not the leader of any company of British socialists. His proclamation of "war to the death against all existing society, so

[1] Die Prix Frederatif, p. 29.

that the revolutionist must be prepared to die, to kill with his own hands all who obstruct the revolution,"[1] would be repudiated, except by a very few, whose reception of the fierce saying makes them the most dangerous of the dangerous class. But his "running amuck against all accepted principles in religion, in politics, in domestic and social life,"[2] is at least faintly shadowed in the tones of many. The American socialist, who would regulate, not merely the production and distribution of wealth, but even the consumption of goods,[3] goes further than his brethren on this side of the Atlantic would allow, but, in some demands which are formulated as to the absorption of all private property in a common good, affinity is joined with him. Thus, though the crystallised view of extremists is disavowed, a virus is insinuated into the talk of societies and the representations of current literature, and the vat is kept in ferment.

But the discontent alluded to is largely fed by that passion for equality which, as De Tocqueville has remarked, is the passion of democracies. Equality of condition, equality of opportunity; none above and none below; all

[1] Quoted in 'Contemporary Socialism,' p. 275.
[2] Contemporary Socialism, p. 267.
[3] Parsons of Chicago.

masters, no servants; none with a more favourable start or stadium than others—such is the vision by which the imagination is dazzled, and both enthusiastic and despondent spirits in this social era hail it. They hail what cannot be. "Nature," says Renan, "is injustice itself,"[1] inasmuch as it teems with inequalities. It is a mere commonplace to say that the equality craved is an idle dream, so long as there are differences in capacity, in gifts, in aptitudes physical, mental, and moral. All that can be done is to secure that every one shall have the best possible opportunity, that there shall be no unnecessary clogs on energy, that there shall be "a more effective participation of the poor equally with the rich in the civilisation which the increased productive resources of society afford the means of enjoying."[2] But when it is urged, as in the essays of socialists it is urged, that "the State ought to make use of its legitimate powers for the establishment of the equality of conditions among men according to their personal merit,"[3] a task is imposed on the State which it is unable to fulfil. The standards—equality of condition and

[1] Quoted by M. de Laveleye in 'Contemporary Review.'

[2] Professor Wagner, Art. "Finan-Politik und Staat sozialismus."

[3] M. de Laveleye in 'Contemporary Review.'

personal merit—are inconsistent; even if they were harmonious, "it would be beyond the power of the State to realise them for want of an effective calculus of either."[1] To inflame unreflective minds by holding up prospects which are mere chimeras, and inducing the feeling that they are defrauded of some rights because of a failure to apply the powers of the State on their behalf—that the *plus* which others have is the reason of their *minus*, and that this *plus* should be taken away—is to appeal to what is meanest in human nature, uselessly to embitter feeling, and to divert the attention from the possibilities of improvement which are within the reach of all who apply their best energy in making the most of the situations that open to them.

We speak of a "divine discontent"; and the hunger and thirst for righteousness, the refusal to allow that the soul has ever attained to the full truth of its life and the eager pressing onward and upward, may be so termed. A certain discontent is caused by the advance of civilisation, and is itself a cause of further advance. In the measure in which standards of wellbeing are heightened, wants multiply, new needs are created, new ambitions are developed; and to

[1] Contemporary Socialism, p. 385.

satisfy these, to realise "life more and fuller," is an incitement to progress. But there is a right and there is a wrong discontent: right, when the desire to be is superior to the mere desire to have, when the mind does not confuse the conditions of happiness with happiness, and understands that the secret of felicity is the better man rather than the better circumstance; when to be true to oneself and to gain the full advantage of all the good that lies in the actual position, is more than a mere craving to get some good that another has, or that lies outwith the sphere of the practicable. There is too little of this right sort; there is too much of the wrong — that which is closely akin to covetousness — in all circles and classes. But there are elements which give a peculiar asperity to the merely covetous instinct when it is sharpened by invectives against society in general, and especially against those who are represented as neither toiling nor spinning. By all means denounce the idle rich as well as the idle poor. By all means insist that the only privilege shall be that which consists with useful service, and that all, in consideration of what they receive through the corporate life of the nation, shall contribute by honest work to the commonwealth. But, to indulge in indis-

criminate diatribes against those whose share of the world's good is larger than that of some; to be for ever inveighing against existing constitutions, and stirring up strife and envy by dwelling on the rights of which capital and privilege defraud the labourer, to the exclusion of the duties that he owes to his world and his God, and of the call to help himself and utilise the sources and occasions of happiness that lie to his hand,—is simply to rob the life of its essential dignity and worth, and to corrupt noble aspiration into an ignoble and rankling covetousness. *Cui bono?* Does the nurture of this species of discontent tend to quicken the impulses of benevolence? Certainly not. Does it tend to strengthen domestic and family relations? The writer has known many who, under the spell of socialistic agitation, felt the simplicities of home-life irksome, became dissatisfied with all the surrounding, and ceased to interest themselves in causes which they had previously furthered. Does it give elevation to the character? It robs the character of a purifying idealism, hitherto one of the finest features in the working classes of our country, and narrows the vision of the life to a jealous observation of, and fruitless sighing after, unattainable conditions "of the earth, earthy."

This is the manner, this is the result, of a discontent which spreads as socialism spreads, and which, though now kept in subordination by counteracting influences, has the potentiality of increasing from a disturbing element into the wild fury of a hurricane.

But further; in the consideration of a system which is presented as the realisation of the social ideal, one of the main interests to the mind, looking on it in the light of Christian truth, must be its relation to the moral law, to the principles and issues on which the moral life of the people is built. The subject thus suggested is so wide that special topics must only be glanced at. For example, family life. It would be unfair to identify socialism as a political scheme with the statements of its advocates. It is entirely compatible with, and is often held along with, strict views as to the foundation and the responsibilities of the home. But the tendencies of the thought of its expositors need to be watched. Thus, in an important work under the joint authorship of the late Mr Morris and Bax, it is said that, with the advent of social economic freedom, "no binding contract between parties as regards livelihood would be necessary, property in children would cease to exist, a new

development of the family would take place, on the basis not of a predetermined lifelong business arrangement, to be formally and nominally held to, irrespective of circumstances, but on mutual inclination and affection, terminable at the will of either party."[1] There can be no doubt that this "new development" is contemplated by some, and these not the least influential, of the leaders of the "new society." And, in their plans of education, such an assumption of responsibility and provision for children is indicated as would practically relieve parents of all but a mere fraction of their responsibility.[2]

But, without dwelling on particular points, it may be asked whether, in respect both of what it introduces into its moral features, and of what it omits, it must not be held to be wanting.

It is a protest against selfishness—the selfishness of capital. The charge that it levels against the political economy which it would supersede is that it ministers to selfishness in its view of wealth, in its theory of barter, in its aims and its canons. It condemns the existing order as founded on and supported by selfishness —that of competition, man against man. Its lash is specially reserved for the capitalist—the

[1] Socialism, p. 299.

[2] *E.g.*, Fabian Society Tract on Education.

selfish thief who has stolen the surplus value of the labourer. We have conceded that there are circumstances which give an occasion for the protest. It would be difficult to conceive of any system—human nature being what it is—which did not afford an occasion. But when the socialist inveighs against society as unjust and selfish, does he propose to overcome the evil that is denounced with good? Is he not setting up another selfishness in opposition to that which he arraigns? In making the interests of labour and of the labourer the one point and goal; in ignoring the elements that minister to the higher taste and culture except in so far as they can be harmonised with a working-class standard of utilities; in confining all his perspectives within the range of a material good and a material paradise, is he not evoking, and providing nourishment for, a very intense and de-toning selfishness?

Socialism, again, holds aloft the banner of brotherhood. Its altruism is that of a fraternity whose method is co-operation, whose *noblesse oblige* is the sense of membership one in another. This it learned of Christ; and it is a reproach to the Church which bears His name that the practical applications of its Lord's new covenant are often more striking in associations that con-

nect only with the outer circle of Christianity than they are within its gates. But when we scan the socialistic fraternity, what do we see? It is a fraternity that is not based on the consciousness of a higher relation—that of sonship to God. Some socialists recognise this; but, in being Christian socialists, they part from the body of opinion which represents all that is most active and influential. In its federation, there is no reference to the authority and example of a supreme love which "will endure when all that seems shall suffer shock." It is essentially a class brotherhood for the furtherance of class interests and ends—interests and ends which, according to its programme, can be secured only through expropriations and confiscations that go perilously near to the violation of the command, "Thou shalt not steal," and which, if secured by the method proposed, would involve the drying up of the springs of individual liberty and energy—the triumph of a partial proletariat to-day, at the cost of a universal proletariat to-morrow. The notes of the old Bethlehem song are not heard in it: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

It is maintained that the aim of socialism is the establishment of social righteousness; and it would be unjust to deny that this is within the view of

its supporters. The objection taken is not to the end intended; it is to the omission of an antecedent condition which is essential to the attainment of the end. That condition is personal righteousness. According to Mr Karl Pearson, the differentiation of socialism from other political and social movements is that it identifies morality with the polity which it presents.[1] The seat of morality is thus transferred to the system. Righteousness consists in submitting to it and in promoting it. But the oracle is silent on the question, how the harmony between the individual and this social happiness is to be effected. A man is not a mere atom that can be fitted into a place. He is a person with a free activity, with a will, and with a force that may be anarchic; one in whom there is a conflict between inclinations, between a law in his members and another and higher law of his mind. He needs to be set right, and no mere economic conditions can do this. Irruptions of passion; the corrosive power of selfishness; the promptings of ambition, of greed, of a desire for mastery rather than ministry; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; tendencies to indolence and indulgence, to weakness, wilfulness, waywardness of temper,—these cannot be disregarded.

[1] *Ut supra*, The Ethics of Free Thought, p. 29.

They will interfere with the acceptance of the most rational of ends; they will break through the most perfect of disciplines. How is the inward adjustment to be realised? Socialism has no place for the word sin: alas! human nature has.

The man and what he is in himself is not a consideration secondary to and dependent on that of his circumstances: it is the consideration on which his true wellbeing depends. In laying the whole stress on external conditions, in making these the main cause and the chief element of the earthly paradise, the system under review is ethically imperfect, and is inadequate to the purpose it contemplates—that of bringing in a new era, "a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." A regenerated society means regenerated persons; persons with a right spirit, persons in whom there is a supreme power making the life consistent by an effective moral self-rule. And when this is belittled, the goal that is interpreted by an eloquent socialistic writer as "the perfecting of human nature in the whole hierarchy of functions, headed by the moral ones"[1] is certainly missed.

When its ethic is unsatisfactory, it is not

[1] Thomas Davidson, The Moral Aspects of the Economic Question, p. 11.

to be wondered at that, in the advocacy of socialism, an attitude of indifference, frequently of hostility, to the worship and ministry of the Church is developed. Not that this is true of all socialists; for, there are many such who are at the same time devout and earnest Christians, and there are others whose aversion is not to the Christian faith, which they sincerely hold, with reservations and interpretations at variance with orthodox standards, but to the existing constitutions and to the spirit and practice of the Churches. This latter class of socialists forms a kind of intermediary element between the Church and — as it must with sorrow be affirmed — the dominant tone and bearing of socialism. Who that has read both its more permanent and its more ephemeral expositions, and that has heard the talk and speeches of its adherents, is not familiar with invectives against the clergy, against the Church as the "peculiar" of the *bourgeoisie* and capitalist, as out of sympathy with the labourer and the struggle in behalf of labour, as toadying to the rich and despising the poor, as a miserable *simulacrum* of the religion which it neither apprehends nor teaches, and so forth. Now, whilst assuredly the Church is not free from blame; whilst, in its arrangements for worship,

a pretext may be found for the charge that its sanctuaries are meant for those who can pay; whilst the rich transgressor is sometimes shielded by the Church to which he is a liberal contributor; whilst ministers of religion have not realised the *rapport* they might have realised with social wants and aspirations; whilst all this and more may be granted, the root of the antipathy referred to is deeper than any objection that may be taken to the necessary imperfections of an ecclesiastical organisation. The root is a radical divergence from the religious ideal. Sometimes the cry is wild and fierce. "Our enemy," a congress at Geneva proclaimed, "is every abstract authority, whether called devil or good God, in the name of which priests have so long governed good souls." But, even when the voice is more subdued, there is no transcendency or spirituality in it. Herzen, who was associated with Bakunin in the consolidation of Russian nihilism, but who afterwards separated himself from the revolutionary party which he had helped to form, spoke of socialism "as the new terrestrial religion in which there is to be neither God nor heaven."[1] And the whole effect of the philosophy which it inculcates is to eliminate the eternal and the

[1] Contemporary Socialism, p. 261.

spiritual. There is no need of a Saviour from sin; for, sin is not in its thought. The other world with what it calls "its stage properties" has no place whatever. It is entirely terrestrial. In the words of Professor Flint, "Even when it does not expressly deny the fundamental convictions on which Christianity rests, it ignores them. It leaves out of account God and divine law, sees in morality simply a means to generate happiness, and recognises no properly spiritual and eternal life. It conceives of the whole duty of mankind as consisting in the pursuit and production of social enjoyment. Hence its ideal of the highest good, and consequently of human conduct, is essentially different from the Christian ideal, and thus it necessarily comes into direct conflict with Christianity."[1]

This earthliness in prospect, aim, and motive is infecting the life of the working classes in our country, and indeed is infecting the life of all classes. It is the cause underlying much of the alienation from social Christian worship that prevails. What can this worship mean to those whose whole interest is narrowed by the vision of a mere earthly paradise, and to whom the terms God, Christ, immortality, life

[1] Socialism, p. 461.

everlasting, contain no reality? In working-class centres, labour-churches are offered as a substitute for the churches which are denounced; and in these assemblies the "terrestrial religion," in the form of addresses on the rights of labour and the wrongs of the labourer, and on the principles and methods of the new economy, is preached. The evil charged against the Church of being a class assembly is presented in another form. It is the class interest, it is the controversy with society, it is the propagation of a certain type of opinion, that predominates. And, without as well as within the Sunday assembly, in the socialism of the chair and in that of the street, this type is in evidence.

The bearing and the duty of the Christian Church towards the socialism that has been reviewed is one of the most serious questions that we are bound to face. To some extent, as we have seen, there is an opposition between ideals, and this represents a divergence in spirit and in purpose, the widening of which would be disastrous to society. What needs to be demonstrated is that, on the one hand, the rejection of the spiritual aspect of life is an untruth to the conception of life as a whole, and that, on

the other hand, Christianity, in emphasising the spiritual, does not the less, but all the more, seek to promote all that contributes to social betterment. Paradises may be left out of account. The aim of the religion of Christ is to make the human life that is, more blessed and less accursed, fuller, richer, more distinctly in sight at once of all that it can be here, and of that vision of God which is supreme and eternal blessedness. How to prove this—how to incorporate the permanent truth of the system or systems whose features have been scanned with the practical religion of Jesus Christ, is the matter as to which there is abundant occasion for "a spirit not of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Patience is required. The entrance of a great idea, of a great regulative principle, into the living thought of men is always marked by crude theorising, by exaggerated assertion, by almost wild rushes in directions to which the idea seems to point. By-and-by, when theories are sifted and the soundness of schemes is tested, there comes that moderating influence which we call common-sense (unless, indeed, by some foolish action a catastrophe is precipitated). What is extreme is discounted, and such parts of schemes as approve themselves to reason are accepted and become

subservient to the common-weal. So it is at present. In a law-abiding country such as ours, with institutions that can be expanded and modified without the loss of historical continuity, we may hope that the unattainable will gradually fall out of view, and that a collectivism shall be realised, which, without suppressing individual freedom and energy, but rather stimulating and guiding it, shall secure more effective legislation and larger benefits for the community. To this end Christian citizenship should look and strive. It should have an open mind in the observation of every movement; keenly scrutinising all that seems at conflict with public and personal morality, but sympathetic with every wise endeavour to support the life of each part by the corporate action of the body politic. When we can work with others whose opinions are more pronounced than the Christian conscience can approve, for the furtherance of a really beneficial result (assuming that they will work with us), then let there be co-operation. This, surely, is the commandment of the love of man for Christ's sake.

Study of social life and social questions is requisite. The Church's diagnosis of social needs and evils may be faulty. It may be necessary, in loyalty to the Lord and to the age that calls

for service, to unlearn much, and to learn still more. Christ's house is bound only to Him and His supreme authority. It is not bound to any political economy; it is not committed to any form or method of government. In a lofty sense, it is to be "all things to all men, that it may gain some." If it would be faithful, it must wait on its Lord, not in the sanctuary only, but in the world into which it is sent, piercing beneath the surface of things into the inner places of humanity, into the submergencies of the population, into the secrets of all its struggles, that it may recognise the signal of His hand, that, through communion with His mind, it may understand what He is saying to it. In the Christian Social Unions of England and Scotland, we can hail the token of an increasing desire more thoroughly to reach to the rock-beds of social topics, and to apply the truths of Christ's teaching to them. These unions have an important mission; for, they may remind all that Churches must, on the one hand, guard against the dead-weight of worn-out conventionalisms, of adherence to mere use and wontness, and, on the other hand, against the adoption of hasty and ill-considered views. Truth is our aim. Forbid that, in the day in which we live, the Church of the Lord should reproduce the picture of the unready king.

On special issues, such as "the strikes" which occasionally raise desolating storms in the industrial world, the individual citizen, be he clergyman or layman, is entitled to think and speak for himself, though, if he is wise, he will be reticent in speech; but when the Church, in its unity, is represented, the utmost caution should be exercised. The late Bishop Westcott was a successful mediator in a great strife in his diocese. But he occupied an exceptionally high position: by the width of his sympathies, the fulness of his knowledge, and the soundness of his judgment, he was trusted as few men can be trusted; his capacity for such mediation was almost unique. Speaking generally, the plane of the Church's action is one, by no means apart from, yet not to be confused with, particular causes. It can most influence when it speaks its own message, and connects the facts and the developments of human life with that message; when, in the power of the Holy Spirit, it takes of the things of Christ and shows them in their relation to present-day experiences and demands. The fellowship for which it witnesses is the completing truth of all social aspiration and effort. In the latest work of the saintly bishop, to whom allusion has just been made, are words which interpret both the mission and the want of the

Church: "In the half-blind strivings towards a larger human communion we find, I believe, an expression of the characteristic want of our times, the want which Christ is waiting to satisfy. We need the outflow of a spiritual force among us which shall bring the deep conviction of the reality of this world-wide fellowship of men. We need it in our personal life, in our national life, in our religious life."[1]

[1] Lessons from Work, p. 103.

CHAPTER XIII.

SOCIAL-ETHICAL TRENDS.

UNDER the term socialism have been comprehended various schemes which, though differing in points of greater or less importance, take a common view of the claims of industrial labour, of the method by which equalisations of condition and opportunity are to be realised, and of the readjustment of society to be effected through the corporate action of the State. But, as has already been remarked, many who cannot accept either all the principles on which these systems are built up, or all the conclusions to which they lead, are yet in sympathy with some of the ideas that pervade them, and it is proposed, in this chapter, to consider certain social-ethical trends in which this sympathy is expressed.

In using the phrase social-ethical, the limitations of our survey will be recognised. It is not the intention to treat of ethics as involving the

laws of personal conduct. These, of course, cannot be set aside, inasmuch as what is true or right, false or wrong, as to the aggregate must correspond to what is true or right, false or wrong, as to the individuals who form the aggregate. But the intention is to regard the crystalline in its wholeness, not to analyse the separate rays in their separateness. In every age, there must be modifications and elasticities in the application of principles to existing facts: as in Lowell's words—

> "New occasions teach new duties,
> Time makes ancient good uncouth."

Every community, moreover, has what may be called a special moral judgment, a judgment that represents the sum of the special influences acting on it and through it. Two or three of such influences let us review.

One of the inclinations of thought which, in this day, connect with social ethics is, the assertion that work, with a moral end in view, is the mark of human worth and dignity. It is true that this is a very old assertion. But, in our time, it has been presented with a new emphasis. Ruskin, in his 'Crown of Wild Olive,' distinguishes between work and play. Both mean action; but the contrast that he states is, "Play is an exertion of

body or mind made to please ourselves, and with no determined end." And, somewhat fancifully, he groups together money-making, horse-racing and betting, ladies' dressing, and war, as "the games which the playing class in England spend their time in playing at." In opposition to all this he sets the work with hand or brain, or both, which fulfils three tests—viz., that it be honest, that it be useful, and that it be cheerful.[1] Now, the contention that the olive crown is the wreath of all who thus work, from the highest to the lowest, that such work is the one and only sign of worthy living, is a feature of the most influential literature of our country, and indeed of the civilised world. No more fervent prophet of the gospel of work has spoken to his generation than Thomas Carlyle. We are now so familiar with his utterances, his writings have so moulded the feeling of men, that we are apt to forget how mighty was the impulse which he gave, and even to speak lightly of him. But there are not a few who can recall the mental and moral incitements realised through the perusal of his 'Sartor Resartus,' his 'Past and Present,' his 'Lectures on Heroes,' his 'Latter-day Pamphlets,'—how they were wont to repeat to themselves his hot, crisp sentences: "Not what I have but what I do,

[1] Crown of Wild Olive, chap. i.

is my kingdom."[1] "That impossible receipt, Know thyself, let it be translated into this partially possible one, Know what thou canst work at."[2] "Be no longer a chaos but a world, or even a world-kin. Produce; produce. Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a product, produce it in God's name."[3] "The situation which has not its duty, its ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Work the ideal out from the actual, and working, believe, live, and be free."[4]

This reiteration supplied the right tonic for an age of prodigious activity. The right tonic; for, in contradistinction to effort for mere material and selfish advantage, it associated work with an ideal, it maintained that the only action which can win the olive crown is that whereby the actual is the translation of the ideal into deed. The range of vision was wider than that of the socialist. It did not make manual labour the standard for all labour. Carlyle recognises two men, and no third,—the one who toils by the hand, and, by his toil, secures the goods and good of the earth; and the other (but to him he gives the higher place), the one who labours for the bread of life, for all that nourishes the higher life of the soul. And in this a distinct ethical note

[1] Sartor Resartus, chap. iv. p. 83.
[2] Ibid., chap. vii. p. 114.
[3] Ibid., chap. vii. p. 136.
[4] Ibid., chap. vii. p. 135.

is sounded, whose vibrations are felt everywhere. Formerly, the only exertion which society would allow to the scions of the upper classes was in the direction of Ruskin's "play." Now, we behold them aspiring after useful service of many kinds. Even in the "game of war," we have beheld the sons of the gentry enlisting as privates in yeomanry corps and in other regiments, so as, in the hour of need, to serve their country. The emancipation of women from conditions that restrained their energy, that doomed multitudes to inane existence, "pecking about like birds after what pleased them," was a consequence of this magnifying of strenuous useful work. Now, women of all degrees recognise that there are careers of usefulness open to them, that they can be helps to society otherwise than through marriage, and helps to themselves in developing the capacities with which they are endowed. A new social bond of cohesion has thus been formed between the various sections of the community, and a new ethical ambition, purifying all life, has thus been stimulated.

The prominence that is given to the ethics of wealth marks another trend of thought in our day —a trend that finds the age in one of its most noticeable features, and one of its chief worships.

Poverty is not the only problem to be pondered by those who aim at social wellbeing. The enormous wealth, referred to in a previous chapter, is also and equally a problem; and in connexion with it the questions arise, How is the wealth made? How is it used? How is it distributed? The Christian Church has surely its mission and its message to the rich as well as to the poor, and it must take care that this mission and this message are not overlooked.

There are prevalent conditions of commercial life which it is impossible to reconcile with a high standard of morals. Tricks abound in every trade; but, with many, trade is a continual trickery. Business transactions have no substance behind them; commodities are bought and sold before they are in the market, or without their being in the market at all. Accommodations of many kinds make business an endless and weary financing. The spirit of speculation infects all classes and grades, from the plutocrat to the message-boy; with what consequences there is no need to specify. The haste to be rich, the need to provide for wants that are created by the ambition to live in stylish ways, is a constant temptation to invest in risky concerns, to clutch at possibilities of gain, which are also possibilities of loss that cannot be met. And

even when methods of action are legitimate, avarice—the craving for more and ever more—immolates at its altars the energy, the strength, the interest of manhood; in the desire to accumulate, nobler and worthier desires are sacrificed, and the man becomes a servant of mammon. It is very difficult to keep the conscience in living correspondence with a high ideal, to keep the hands clean and the heart pure, in the scramble for money that everywhere confronts us, and amid the competitions that become every year more pressing. The Christian merchant is not an unknown person—on the contrary, he is to be often met; but sometimes it is scarcely possible to harmonise transactions with the law of Christ.

Assuming wealth to be honestly gotten, the vital issue is, How is it to be used; what are the principles which should guide those who have the larger shares of this world's goods? This is an issue that requires to be fairly considered. We cannot lay down hard and fast rules. It must be admitted that differences in social position, in taste, and in temperament, imply differences in the expenditure by which a man receives the good of his labour. Wealth, too, has an office to discharge in the promotion of art, of the higher forms of culture, of the more refined aspects of social life. Increases of comfort are inevitable.

But, when this is said, the line must be drawn between elegance and mere luxury. Consumption of means, parade of means, in extravagant fashion —in ways that are quite beyond all that really beautifies and enriches existence—is to be utterly condemned. The wealthiest, no less than the poorest, stand before a white throne, and the books of the life are opened, and judgment is made out of the books. And if, as thus judged, excesses, ministering only to ostentation, to vainglory, to an enervating softness, to heartless selfish enjoyment, are proved, the sentence, Guilty, is swift and sure. The waste of wealth is sin.

That the possessor of wealth is responsible to God and to society for its administration is a conviction which every year is becoming more intense. In the tone of those organs of public opinion that reflect the best feeling of the country, we can observe a growing impatience of the dissipation of fortunes on frivolities, and the reckless squandering of means on betting and gambling. For the gratification of æsthetic taste, and for all that healthily ministers to refinement, liberal margins are allowed. None will object to such a provision for families as shall secure a vantage-ground for the exercise of their aptitudes, without bringing on them the curse of idleness, or leading them into the temptations which the

want of stimulus to action causes. But, in respect of all beyond this, it is more and more demanded that a man should regard himself, not as the absolute and irresponsible proprietor, but as the trustee, for behoof of his world, of the riches he has inherited or acquired—that these riches should be held as an estate with whose administration he is charged. Wealth has its obligation and its privilege. It is a privilege to have an abundance to give, to be able to originate or to direct causes that benefit mankind, to identify personal joy with the welfare of others. It is an obligation to study the best ways and methods of doing this. Indiscriminate and injudicious benevolence demoralises society, and works ill to one's neighbour. He who would really benefit must wisely consider and act. It is a poor evasion alike of privilege and of obligation to hoard money during the lifetime, and leave it to charities in a last will and testament: to keep it so long as it can minister to the mere pride of life, and to give directions as to its application after the owner's death. The death-duties rightly snatch a portion for the good of the nation; the moral which they point being that men should be their own executors, utilising the surplus which they have, in the consciousness of a stewardship that they cannot re-

nounce, for the glory of God and the good of their fellows.

An object-lesson on the duty of the wealthy has been given by Mr Carnegie, the well-known millionaire of Pittsburg. In his 'Gospel of Wealth' he thus states the responsibility of the man of wealth: "To set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and, after doing so, to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust-funds which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer, in the manner which in his judgment is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community; the man of wealth thus becoming the mere trustee and agent for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer, doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves."[1] These are words that express a high ethical ideal — words that the Christian Church, in the light of its great Exemplar, should "teach and exhort."

But another view of wealth has been presented, which must not be omitted from our survey.

[1] The Gospel of Wealth, p. 15.

Ruskin, often in eccentric fashion and with unnecessary exaggerations, set himself to the task of combating apprehensions which he held to be promotive of a base prostration before the golden image of Dura. He attacked political economists as blameworthy, in so far as they narrowed the scope of a science that is especially needful for the nation to mere money-making, and as they ignored the first and the essential condition of the wealth of a people and of individuals. He distinguished between wealth, money, and riches. Wealth, he urged, consists in things essentially valuable; money consists in things of currency and exchange; riches include the relations of men to each other, and the just laws of their association for purposes of labour.[1] With all his might he affirmed that in wealth, properly so called, there are two elements of value—the *intrinsic*, denoting all that contributes to life or has the power of supporting life, and is thus essentially useful; and the *effectual*, denoting the capacity in the person to accept and realise the use, and thus have the life which is ministered to. Wanting either of these, nothing, he maintained, could be an occasion of wealth; having both of these, there is wealth—that is, life and life abundant.

Here, then, is a great ethical inspiration—the

[1] Munera Pulveris, chap. i. pp. 10, 11.

inspiration long ago breathed into the nostrils of humanity by Him who knew what is in man. But it is uttered in a new form. The point to be grasped is, that the first requirement in order to wealth is that there be that which in itself and for itself is everlastingly worthy, and that there be the power to possess this and turn it to its full account. A millionaire may have money in heaps. If he utilise that money for the securing of noble objects, and if he be himself a noble man, the money, by that which it commands, lifts him into the region of wealth. If he hoard as a miser, the love of the money eating into his soul; or if he spend it on things and in ways that are ignoble, if not wrong; if he be himself a mean, small-minded, and narrow-souled man; to him it may be said, "Thy money perish with thee; it is not wealth, it is but a pile piled on a moral carcass."

This teaching may seem hazy. Many whom it reached shrugged their shoulders and pronounced Ruskin a dreamer. It was so unpopular that the editors of magazines in which he expounded it were obliged to discontinue the publication of articles relating to it. Scientifically, it may be at fault. But, nevertheless, there is in it a conception which has laid hold of minds—such as Arnold Toynbee and Patrick Geddes—that have influenced their generation, and through

them, slowly perhaps but surely, it has become a part of the experience of the time. Even where the view of wealth as life which it expresses is not fully received, it is operative. A more distinctly ethical element has been infused into political science, and additional momentum has been given to altruistic feeling and service.

This altruistic feeling, this humanitarian trend, is one of the most conspicuous features in the social ethics of the present day.

Altruism has been exalted into a worship. The most explicit form of the worship is to be found in the Positivism propounded by M. Auguste Comte. In the earlier period of his career, Comte sneered at "religiosity as a mere weakness and avowal of want of power." But, in the later period, he discovered that religiosity cannot be dismissed with a sneer, and he elaborated a travesty of Roman Catholicism which he intended to be the glorifying of humanity, to be an education in the love of humanity, to be the expression of the only true morality—that in which the progress of the race is made the one end and the only good of life. Comtism as a system has waned. It is a house divided against itself, split into sections that are bitterly hostile to each other. And, in the circles to which it appealed

most powerfully, the more explicit socialisms of the Continent and of Great Britain have supplanted it.

But the essence of the system pervades the thought of the time. It is "the only philosophy that is a really new agent in progress."[1] Christianity is humanitarian. But the new agent, as interpreted by its more prominent advocates, diverges from Christianity when it separates the love of the neighbour from the first commandment, to which, in Christ's teaching, it is like—the commandment "to love God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might"—and when it eliminates the central motive-power, the love of man for Christ's sake and in Christ's love. Altruism, in magnifying the love of one's neighbour, opposes that to the love of self. The love of self is to be lost. The New Testament recognises a legitimate self-love, not to be lost, but to be the measure of the love of one's neighbour. Altruism has its religion in itself. The synthesis which it desires is one that explains man and his universe only from man's point of view. George Eliot, in whose writings this humanitarianism is skilfully presented, "takes religious patriotism for the subject of her last novel,[2] but is at some pains to show that her hero

[1] Mallock, 'Is Life worth living?' chap. i.

[2] Daniel Deronda.

may be religious without any belief in God, and patriotic without any but an ideal country." [1]

There is a humanitarianism which has a religious hue, but this kind sometimes assumes an eccentric character. The Tolstoyism that has developed in Russia is an illustration which presents many points of interest.

Count Leo Tolstoy, a noble of ancient lineage, under the power of altruistic convictions, renounced his position with all its privileges, and chose to live as a labourer among labourers. The history of his inner life gives a special character to his self-renunciation. In 1845, when he was sixteen years of age, he discarded all religion. His moral attitude then and for many years thereafter, and the genesis of the new faith by which he was quickened, are outlined in one of the principal persons in his painfully realistic novel, 'Anna Karénina.' Levin (so far a portrait of himself) became obstinately sceptical as to all the beliefs in which he had been reared. From the age of twenty to thirty-four, "our organism and its destruction, the indestructibility of matter, the laws of the conservation and development of forces, were words which were substituted for the terms of his early

[1] Quoted in 'Life, is it worth living?' by the present writer, p. 64.

faith."[1] Then came the shock caused by his brother's death. He realised that these terms "stood for nothing in the face of real life." The problem of his existence—the problems of existence—haunted and tormented him; and, scrutinising "the whole arsenal of his scientific convictions, he could find no answer whatever to his questions." The more he puzzled, the greater was his despair. Tortured by his ignorance, listless as to "anything that was good and useful for all, for humanity," he left his barn one day, after a period of toil, along with a humble machine-tender. In the course of their talk, the names of two men were mentioned, and the *muzhik* said: "'Men differ. One lives for his belly, like Mitiukh' (one of the two), 'but Fokanuitch' (the other) 'is an honest man; he lives for his soul, he remembers God.' 'What do you call living for the soul and remembering God?' exclaimed Levin eagerly. 'Why, that's plain enough,' was the rejoinder. 'It is to live according to God, according to truth.' The simple words echoed through the heart, and weighty thoughts, as from a hidden source, arose, filling him with their brilliant light."[2] "Reason," he said to himself, "has nothing to do with loving the neighbour." He

[1] Anna Karénina, p. 741. [2] Ibid., pp. 748, 749.

could not accept all the teaching of the Church, but he could live that life of the soul which alone is worth living for; and henceforth life would be, "not meaningless as before, but full of a deep meaning which he would have power to impress on every action."

This is the picture of Tolstoy (and, more or less, it is the picture of many persons in the present day). Impatient of creeds, of councils, of fathers, of St Paul himself, the one point is "access to the spirit of life through Jesus." Tolstoy's doctrine, such as it is, is extracted from the Sermon on the Mount. He comprehended his doctrine in five great commandments of peace—commandments which are the articles of universal brotherhood. What his religious position to-day is, it may be difficult to determine. The orthodox Greek Church has excommunicated him; it is to be hoped that he still clings to "Christ's Christianity." But he has his followers who, as is frequently the case, have not observed the limits of the master. He has lived with his wife and children. They have become a colony, almost monastic without a monastery,—"ranging from nobles and millionaires to tramps and peasants, and possessing not even coat and spade, but happy, contented,

serene, overflowing with hard work and brotherly kindness."[1]

All this is suggestive of features reproduced, with variations, in many lands. It represents (or misrepresents?) humanitarianism in its more emotional and mystical aspects. Humanitarianism has other aspects—the scientific, the political, the evangelistic, the practically philanthropic. But that now specified is, perhaps, the most interesting of all. In one form or another—Christian, non-Christian, anti-Christian—the ethic of the day is humanitarian. And the world insists, as Christianity does, on the altruism of deed, not mere word. It is intolerant of the arm-chair men, who

> "Debate the evil of the world
> As though they bore no portion of that ill,
> As though with subtle phrases they could spin
> A woof to screen us from life's undelight;
> Sometimes prolonging far into the night
> Such talk, as loth to separate and find
> Each in his solitude how vain are words
> When that which is opposed to them is more."[2]

Such, then, are some of the more conspicuous ethical trends of our day. Their influence is apparent in its politics. It is impossible to

[1] 'Edinburgh Review,' July 1901.

[2] Quoted by Canon Gore, Bampton Lecture, p. 201.

separate the political from the ethical. They are necessary each to the other, if, indeed, the one is not a part of the other.[1] Though, in respect of method and, so far, of motive, they are apart, they have the same end in view, the same background and the same foreground. "On the one hand," writes Professor Sidgwick, "the duty or virtue of any individual is held to consist essentially in the performance of his functions as a member of a social organism, in such a manner as to realise or effectually promote the wellbeing of the whole organism, whilst on the other hand a certain kind of political order is generally held to be an indispensable condition or constituent of such wellbeing."[2] Now, we can trace the main currents of social ethics in the ampler perspectives of legislation, witnessing to the change which has passed over the conception of the State and of the powers and province of government. And in these perspectives, in this change —in the lines of advance which are thus indicated—many will recognise the pathway of such a harmonious development of national life, such a consistency in the growing sway of beauteous order with the growths in the life of man, as shall secure a real counteractive to the wild and

[1] Aristotle maintained that it was.

[2] Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics, p. 20.

irrational types of socialism which denounce all private property as immoral, and in whose extreme left we discern the gunpowder and the dynamite of the anarchist.

But, irrespective of all direct political reference, the dominating subject of interest to the Church is the moral or ethical life of the people. It is sometimes affirmed that an ethical standard is involved in the civilisation of the twentieth century. To a certain extent this is true. But Mr Mackenzie justly reminds us that "civilisation, as it actually exists, is partly a product of the vices as well as of the virtues of mankind, and is adapted to the former as well as to the latter. It is not arranged for the extinction of vice, but at most, in Burke's language, 'that vice may lose half its evil by losing half its grossness. It is arranged not for the promotion of virtue but only of respectability.'" [1] If, therefore, rank growths of evil no less than good may be expected as the product of civilisation, the inquiry remains, What is the vitality of the force that is working, as from an inner moral centre, through our civilisation?

The signs are mixed. Looking up and down, out and about, on the hollowness of much of the religious profession of the day; on the absence of

[1] Manual of Ethics, p. 391.

lofty motive in the conduct of man to man and man to woman; on the selfishness in competitions and rivalries, by which the strong push the weak out of the running and leave the less fit hopeless and forlorn; on the immoralities in trade, the more than questionable practices in vogue in commercial circles; on the heartless frivolity, ostentation, luxury, and looseness of large areas of fashionable life, and the low, coarse animalism of thousands on thousands of the population,—taking these and many other features into account, a despondent feeling is apt to steal into the mind. Who does not often realise this feeling, and with Tennyson, in "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After," has not sometimes been moved to protest—

"When was age so crammed with menace? madness? written, spoken, lies?

. . . . . .

Evolution ever climbing after some ideal good,
And Reversion ever dragging Evolution in the mud."

An even more cynical note may ring through the protest—such a note as that sounded by a biographer of Ibsen as an appropriate motto for him:—"Let others complain of this age as being wicked. I complain of it as being contemptible; for it is devoid of passion. Men's thoughts are thin and frail as lace; they themselves are the weakling

lacemakers. The thoughts of their hearts are too paltry to be sinful." [1]

But this represents the mood of a dismal day when the sky is leaden, and the rain drips, and there is no tonic in the air; the mood of a moral climate which, having lost the sunshine of faith, and being laden with manifold unhealthiness, depresses the system and turns the light in the soul into darkness. Against all that is untoward in the social prospect are to be set the tokens, neither few nor uncertain, of a purpose, whose momentum is ever increasing, to reduce the vices and degradations that are casting dark shadows across our civilisation,—a steadily progressive movement towards better life-conditions and averages, higher levels and nobler loves for the individual units of mankind. Why is it that attention so concentrates on the plague-spots in all our cities? Why is it that the best thought of the period is so exercised on the question, What is to be done to make life wealthier and worthier, and, What are the most effective methods of such doing? Why is it that on all sides there are organised efforts directed against particular social evils and iniquities? Why is it that persons of all ranks are drawn together, as by an irresistible magnetism, in strenuous endeavours to

[1] Ibsen and Bjornsen, by George Brand, p. 49.

"work out the beast in men's world" and "let the ape and tiger die"? In the early part of last century, the state of our country was immeasurably worse than it is in this, the dawning year, of the new century. And the men of that time slumbered and slept. There has been a great awakenment of conscience. The moral ideal, as has been shown, is higher. The chasm between the ideal and the actual is more vividly perceived, and for the width of this chasm society is arraigning itself as verily guilty. Government is active. Municipalities are active. Science and art are active. The demand is for more and better education; and education is being made ever more comprehensive in its survey, and more ethical in its spirit and aim. Houses are improving. Healthier recreations are provided. The reverence for the person of woman or man which Milton commends is more strenuously inculcated, and many endeavours are made to elevate and purify tastes and habits. All forces, intellectual, social, and religious, are in full operation—the voice sounding through all as the sound of many waters being, "In God's name, let men be free in the freedom of the truth." This awakenment, this consensus of aims, this determination of will, is in itself the most hopeful of features, the most convincing of the signs of a stronger ethical life.

It bids us be of good cheer. It reminds us that, through all the groans and travail of our time, the manifestation of the sons of God is being hastened. As William Watson has sung,—

"The new age stands as yet
Half built against the sky,
Open to every threat
Of storms that clamour by;
Scaffolding veils the walls
And dim dust floats and falls,
As moving to and fro their tasks the masons ply."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SOCIAL WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE PRESENT DAY.

It has been shown that the problems of modern society relating to the conditions under which vast multitudes live and move and have their being bristle with difficulties whose solution marks the strenuous endeavour of thoughtful and earnest men. We have considered a class of theories which, however they may differ in detail, agree in the demand that the State shall be transformed, and that the present social system shall be revolutionised; and the consideration has indicated a fatal unsoundness in their economic positions, and sometimes a fatal deficiency in moral tone. In the previous chapter, certain social-ethical trends were regarded; but of them it must be said that, whilst they are interesting and significant as exhibitive of the tendencies of influential convictions, their effectiveness depends

on the hold that Christian ethics, in its springs, principles, and laws, has of the social conscience. The conclusion at which we arrive is, that the virtue by which the wounds and bruises of humanity can be healed is not contained in any special philosophy or economy: that may do much; but, in order to the stanching of the issue, there must be internal rectifications as well as external readjustments — improved environment, but also regenerated life. This is the witness which the Christian Church is called to bear; and in accordance with the witness is its action to be shaped. It has a temporal, but it has first a spiritual, mission. And the inquiry with which we are now concerned is, How far is it fulfilling this mission, temporal as well as spiritual, in the midst of the clashing views and in the face of the perplexing circumstances by which it is confronted?

This inquiry is forced into prominence by the attacks and insinuations to which reference has already been made. Saint-Simon gave the keynote for such attacks when he declared, as against both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Churches, that "they had lost their power simply because they had neglected their great temporal mission of raising the poor, and because their clergy remained absolutely ignorant of the

living social questions of the times."[1] Thus he wrote a hundred years ago, and thus men write still. Is the accusation that they hurl justified?

We do not need to borrow the speech of a false humility, but neither have we occasion to assume a pharisaic self-complacency. Many of those who condemn the Churches and the clergy are in dead earnest—men whose self-devotion, intensity, and force entitle them to respect. And, as was remarked in an earlier page of this book, it is not to be wondered at that men of this stamp, into whose souls the iron has entered, feel that there is an atmosphere of unreality about much of the teaching, much in all that bulks most largely in the aspect and business, of the Church. But when this has been said—not for the purpose of turning the cheek to any smiter, but for the purpose of receiving that "reproof of the righteous which is excellent oil"—let us ask whether it can fairly be charged that "the Church has neglected its great temporal mission of raising the poor"?

In former chapters of this volume, it was demonstrated that, notwithstanding all its faults and imperfections, the Christian Church in the nineteen centuries of its history has penetrated into deeper places of human life than all political

[1] Contemporary Socialism, p. 218.

forces have done; that it has been the social friend, benefactor, regenerator, in ways often unobserved, and through influences never blazoned forth to public view. It is affirmed, indeed, that the ministers of the Church have for the most part resisted improvements; that, jealous of movements which might impair ecclesiastical authority, they have tenaciously clung to old orders even when new orders were displacing them; and that they have combined with principalities and powers in opposing enfranchisements of the people. In this assertion, there may be some truth; but, as an indictment against a whole class, it is not borne out by facts. The clergy are not usually men "given to change"; and it is no disadvantage to the cause of progress that there should be an intelligently critical attitude towards new departures. The *rationale* of these departures—their basis, aims, and advantages—must be made evident, in order that they may obtain the consent which can render them fully beneficial. If the wheels of the chariot seem to tarry, the future advance is only the more fully assured. But, any person who impartially studies the records of the past will find that the Church has been in the front, rather than in the rear, of the march. Certainly, it has been so in Scotland. By the plantation

of kirks, the division of parishes, the building of manses, centres of intellectual light and of Christian sympathy were provided in every part of the land, from which have issued agencies and offices of beneficence. The Church was, for centuries, the national almoner to the poor. It was the Church that fostered education when statesmen gave little heed to it; by its exertions, the parish school was placed beside the parish church; any encouragement that was given to secondary education and to the universities was, during many generations, given by the Church. Undoubtedly, dark shadows rest on ecclesiastical activities in days that are gone. The belief in witchcraft, and the cruelties perpetrated by presbyteries and presbyters on supposed witches, are frequently quoted. The blemish is admitted. It was a sign of the semi-barbarous and superstitious feeling that lingered in the country—an excrescence of fanaticism, fostered by the isolation of Scotland from the play of wider civilisations, which was gradually removed. The most enlightened churchmen opposed it. But to this blemish and to other blemishes, we can oppose the many social impulses that were given by the Church. Agricultural advance was largely due to the older race of parish ministers—that with which the term "Moderate" is identified. We need not have

any bias towards the type of mind which the Moderate represented, and yet, in justice, recognise that, in the words of Mr Grey Graham, "most of the literary and cultured clergy belonged to that class; those of most practical energy, shrewdest to advance improvement in trade and agriculture, the sagacious advisers of their flocks on week-days, and wise teachers of duties on Sunday. . . . The encouragement to new methods of industry often came from those shrewd parish ministers."[1] And, in the more modern time, when a higher spiritual tone was evidenced in the Church, the furtherance of social utilities did not abate. The founder of savings banks in Scotland was an evangelical Dumfriesshire clergyman. No man of his day gave more heed to social science and its applications than Dr Chalmers. The champion of the bothy lads in Forfarshire was the Rev. Harry Stuart of Oathlaw. And who that recalls the names of Norman Macleod, and Thomas Guthrie, and William Robertson of Edinburgh; the labours of the General Assembly's Commis-

[1] Social Life in Scotland,' vol. ii. p. 96, note p. 97. Sir Henry Craik ('A Century of Scottish History,' vol. i. p. 385) writes concerning the Moderates: "In the minds of this dominant party the Church was to take an active part in the promotion of every scheme of public improvement, and was to accept as a Christian duty the advancement of the material welfare of the nation."

sion on the Religious Condition of the people, with its voluminous reports, glancing into all the scenes and circumstances of life in Scotland; the work of the Commission of Glasgow Presbytery on the Housing of the Poor; the expanding ministries of Home Missions in the Church of Scotland, the United Free Church, and other Churches; the unwearied devotion of the Roman Catholic clergy and the toils of the sisterhoods and societies in the Roman Church; who that reviews the ecclesiastical situation with an open mind needs to be told that almost the last thing which should be charged against Christian Churches is that they have not discharged their "temporal mission of raising the poor." They may not have been always wise in their methods, and the result of all the endeavour may not have realised the full fruition of the prayers and pains bestowed; but they have accepted the care of the poor, and they have not been indifferent to the social wants and aspirations of their age.

The tokens of manifold social activity abound. In the days of old, when the population was sparse, and life was quiet, if not slumberous, it was deemed sufficient to have a house of worship for the parishioners. Now, at least in all more populous centres, the Church must

have halls, premises for the prosecution of Christian work in the surrounding district, for the purposes of instruction, recreation, and fellowship. More and more, a congregation is developing from a company of "hearers" of the minister into a partnership for the carrying out of the objects of the Christian society. And, in connexion both with Church and with University, there are some striking illustrations of social endeavour which it may be well to regard.

The contention, it will be understood, is that we cannot absolutely separate between the social and the spiritual; that, in aiming at the conversion of the individual soul, the Church is really aiming at and promoting social good; that every one who welcomes Christ as the light of his seeing becomes necessarily a force economically and morally gainful to the world. Social science cannot overlook the springs of human action. What they are — their wholesomeness and vitality — is, after all, the first of considerations. A man may be improved through the improvement of his environment, — assuredly, he will be deteriorated when he is left with a wretched environment, — but the improvement coming from without will be effectual only when there is an improvement coming

from within. It is said that the wellbeing of the proletariat (so called) is dependent on a revolution, by which the State shall be made the universal capitalist and providence of the nation; but human nature in its waywardness and its selfishness needs to be dealt with: the social happiness desiderated is possible only through such a renewal of the will as shall deliver a true self-love, perfected in social fellowships and disciplines, from a love of self which separates from one's neighbour. Permanently elevated life implies the moral dynamic that Christianity specially contemplates. "The welfare of a society," it has been said, "is nothing except as it exists in the conscious experiences of the men and women who compose it."

The ministries that are based on principles, or aim at results, which place the moral elevation of the individual in the forefront, represent varieties in effort not easily classified. There shall be no attempt in these pages to do so; only some examples of the practical expression of the Christian enthusiasm of humanity shall be given.

If the endeavours that are mainly directed to the conversion of the soul sunk in carelessness and sin are not enlarged upon, this is not

because they are undervalued. Far from it. But the present point of view is a social one, and evangelistic labour is referred to only with the view of bringing out that, almost necessarily, it allies itself with humanitarian labours and ends. "What is the use," exclaims General Booth, "of preaching the Gospel to men whose whole attention is concentrated upon a mad desperate struggle to keep themselves alive? The first thing to do is to get a man at least a footing on firm ground, and to give him room to live. Then you may have a chance."[1] So it is that, in the desire to gain the citadel of the being, an evangelistic agency gathers around it a vast philanthropic service: how vast, how comprehensive of the needs and wants of both body and soul, the work of such an association as the United Evangelistic Association of Glasgow testifies.

Our survey includes organisations whose outlook is, not so much the regeneration of the life by the power of the Gospel of Christ, as the reformation of the ways and habits of the people, the utilisation of educational and moral forces in widening the horizons of thought, and the elevation of the average standards of action.

[1] In Darkest England, p. 145.

Has not the expansion of such endeavours, within recent years, been wonderful? For this, let us freely admit, we are largely indebted to the diffusion of views with a socialistic tendency, to the influence of a social interest that has laid hold of minds which ordinary Church methods would not have attracted. Some instances of this inspired energy, and of the methods by which it adapts itself to a new era, may be cited. It is fitting that these instances should connect with London, in the social condition of whose millions are most fully mirrored the heaven and the hell of humanity.

A young undergraduate of Oxford, too soon taken to his rest,—Arnold Toynbee,—felt the stimulating force of John Ruskin's teaching on art and on other topics. He projected the plan of a community of persons with means and leisure, associated in residence, not for the nurture of a solitary and particular virtue, but for the service of their fellows—"to raise the level of the social and moral conditions of life, to lessen the evils of sweating, and heartless management in workshop and factory, and to stimulate a healthier and more active interest in the educational and municipal movements in the neighbourhood."[1] The densely crowded

[1] Report of Christian Social Union Settlement, 1900, p. 6.

district of Whitechapel was selected as the scene of the residence. A hall was founded in 1884 — since that date enlarged — as "a home for university men who, after the conclusion of their university curriculum, wish to combine work for others with the duties of their own profession or vocation, or who may be able to devote the main portion of their time to such work." A mediæval fraternity, with a nineteenth-century aspect and a much more elastic constitution and object, was revived in the region of London slums. The conception was effective. Its realisation became an impressive memorial of the originator. To-day, a wide machinery — educational, recreative, gymnastic — is related to it. Its residents are managers of schools, and serve in public bodies. There are lectures, classes, social evenings, friendly societies, co-operative societies. Conferences on social questions are held. Lawyers are at hand to help those who cannot pay for legal advice. Men and women of good social status meet from time to time on equal terms with the people of Whitechapel. This Toynbee London Hall has been multiplied in different parts of the Empire; the original type, with local variations, being preserved. It cannot be reckoned as a Church organisation.

It does not even set Christianity in evidence. But neither is it non-religious: for, in the words of its London head, "it welcomes as residents or associates those who bring to the house that consciousness of dependence, that humility of thought, that willingness to spend and be spent which goes with all forms of true religion."[1] The reports issued year by year give most interesting pictures, from different points, of the many-sided activities that enter into the life of a settlement.

Other settlements, more or less approximating to Toynbee, have been organised. In Hoxton, the Christian Social Union has its men's and women's hostels, which provide social and material ministration, without excluding the deeper and more spiritual sides of work, the aim being to extend influence "further and further until this one will join hands with that one across the myriads of despondent toilers, and men shall realise at last that the Fatherhood of God is their inheritance and the brotherhood of man their dearest privilege, and that these together embody and fulfil the highest instincts and truest aspirations of humanity itself."[2] Again, in North

[1] The Sixteenth Report of the Universities' Settlement in East London, p. 11.

[2] First Annual Report of Christian Social Union Settlement, p. 9.

London and Vauxhall, the Lady Margaret Hall is a nucleus of women's effort on behalf of children, in promotion of women's industries, and in aid of distress.[1] So also, in another part of the same district, the St Hilda's East Settlement, representing the Cheltenham Ladies' College, gives "former pupils of the college the opportunity of doing work amongst the poor of the East, and learning the best ways of helping them."[2]

Very noticeable are the institutions that associate both Church and University in social work. Oxford House, in Bethnal Green, has its clubs and institutes, its musical and dramatic associations, its lectures week-day and Sunday, its service in surrounding parishes, in hospitals, in convalescent homes, in schools, in committees for the promotion of thrift, and the erection of better houses; and thus it provides a wide opportunity for those who sympathise with its ultimate aim—"the promotion of religion by the creation of a more congenial at-

[1] Report, June 1899-June 1900: "No branch of work undertaken by the Lady Margaret Hall Settlements has prospered more, or is more full of promise for the future, than the work among invalids, crippled and defective children."

[2] Report June 1899-July 1, 1900: "The house provides accommodation for 14 residents, and work can also be arranged for those who are not able to live in Bethnal Green, but who are willing to give a certain amount of time weekly."

mosphere and a higher tone of morality."[1] The ladies' branch, with its clubs, its parochial and its charitable organisation society work, its holiday undertakings, and its St Neot's Home, is a fitting complement.[2] On similar lines, the sister University of Cambridge conducts a vigorous agency. Amongst its special features, federations of working-men's clubs, and developments in the regions of athletics, lads' brigades, and children's country holidays, may be mentioned. The most recently issued report concludes with the words, "The time has now come when, with increased faith in our vitality, we can send out a stronger challenge than ever to Cambridge men past and present to help us in carrying on a work that has proved its staying power and its strong foundations.[3] Lastly, in East London, Mansfield House, the youngest of Oxford colleges, and an intellectual

[1] Report for 1899, p. 17: "It was the aim of the promoters of the Settlement to undertake a social work which, by improving the condition of social life, by efforts to promote healthy recreation, by the endeavour to widen the intellectual interests of men and boys, by banding together in a common work all who desired the improvement of the district, might strengthen and organise the forces of opposition to irreligion and viciousness of life."

[2] Report for 1900: "Our staff, resident and non-resident, has grown and strengthened in numbers and in experience; and we have readily and confidently enlarged our club-enterprises; adopted fresh districts; and served on more C.O.S. and other committees."

[3] Report for 1900.

centre of English Nonconformity, has its University settlement. Its success has fully realised the hope which inspired its formation—that it might "become common ground on which men and women of various classes may meet in goodwill, sympathy, and friendship; that the residents might learn something of the conditions of an industrial neighbourhood, and share its interests, and endeavour to live among their neighbours a simple and religious life." By its Sunday afternoon brotherhoods and Sunday union meetings; its public and social work; its courses of lectures, reading circles, classes, dramatic performances, musical evenings, recreative agencies; its clubs, guilds, lodging-house, convalescent home,—by these agencies, and in other ways, it establishes touch between residents with their friends, and the people of the surrounding district.[1]

These are typical illustrations of a kind of social work, actuated by Christian motives and aims, which presents features that deserve attention.

First, the settlements referred to interpret a desire whose diffusion is the best guarantee that transitions to any new order, or any modifications of the existing order, shall be accomplished with-

[1] Report for 1900.

out serious social dislocations; the desire to bring the more cultured and opulent classes into closer relation to the life and needs of the industrial or the poorer population. The settlements are conducted on the lines of brotherhood. They recognise in manhood and womanhood, apart from the mere surrounding, the root and reason of the true equality—the equality of the common sonship to God, and of the fraternity which is the outcome of this sonship. They unite residents and associates in the purpose to live a simple religious life, and, with singleness of mind, to do what they can with what they have towards the increase of the sum of happiness and virtue. They remind all that "goodness is the only investment which never fails." They supply a *clinique* for those who accept goodness as the investment of their life. They offer an opportunity of practical instruction in the great art of being useful in right ways to their fellows. The houses and halls are the seat of colonies, planted in the denser areas of the city, with its bitter cries ever ringing in their ears—its wants studied, not from an armchair, but in closest neighbourhood. And, in the free, frank intercourse, divested of all that savours of patronage, which is established between those who have and those who have not, a fusion of interests, a com-

munity of feeling, is realised which recalls the vision of a far-past day, when they who believed had all things in common. Surely, in this there is a finger pointing to an era yet coming, when

> "Man to man the warld o'er,
> Shall brithers be for a' that."

Further, the London settlements, and similar settlements in other cities, interpret the breadth of the Christian spirit. All that is human is declared to be an interest. The estate of the people is reached at many points and on many sides—child-life, lad-life, men's life, women's life, family life. The physical, intellectual, sanitary, moral aspects are all comprehended. A prohibitory "Don't" is not too obtrusive: the endeavour is to find the right stimulus that shall counteract the wrong, to separate coarse and degrading features from amusement, to make things which should be lovely really attractive, and to win men from evil by giving them new tastes, inclinations, and affections. Benevolence, in doles of charity, is not encouraged; that which is encouraged is the best form of benevolence—the putting of grit into the soul, the helping of persons to work out their own salvation. The object is always to make effective the truth of the citizenship, which, as J. H. Green says, "alone

gives that self-respect without which there is no lasting social order or real morality."

And yet a definite conviction, a definite highest purpose, is ever present. It has been observed that, in many socialistic schemes, there is a scanty recognition of the spiritual and moral forces. In some, there is no place for the eternal, there is no room for Christ, except in so far as some maxim or saying of Christ gives point to a contention. Here, then, the Christian social work parts from such schemes. Maintaining fellowship with those who believe that new constructions of society and of industry are demanded, with a view to the amelioration of social ills, those who are associated in service, at all events in the University Settlements and in the Christian Union, hold fast the Christian faith in its essential integrity. They hold that "it is hopeless to think of founding an enduring democratic State, on the principles of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, unless these principles are always sustained and invigorated by the divine fraternal love that flows from faith in Jesus Christ." This is the position assumed, and "the more," as the report of the Christian Social Union puts it, "one traces the history of the different attempts which have been made to grapple with the misery of bygone years, the more one realises how fleeting

in its effects—nay, how absolutely futile—all social reform must be unless it is accompanied step by step by the deeper influences of the Christian faith."[1]

Colonies of university men and others who are well to do have been described; another and a very different species of colony may be briefly referred to. Workmen, sometimes in consequence of their own ill-doing, and sometimes by reason of misfortunes, are thrown out of employment, and the unskilled among them are in danger of lapsing into vagrancy. To meet this kind of distress, labour colonies in England and in Scotland have been organised. The Scottish Colony Association, though still in the day of small things, has made an interesting and a promising experiment. A farm in Dumfriesshire was first rented and then purchased, and to it are transferred men out of work, unfit for work, who there, in exchange for such labour as their strength permits, obtain food and shelter. The new-comers may be seen, as they arrive at their temporary home, emaciated and feeble. They get a light task at first, and, in the measure of their physical recuperation, a heavier task. None are allowed to be idle; and usually in three months' time, refreshed by the pure air,

[1] Report for 1900, pp. 6, 7.

invigorated by the regular exercise and the plain but wholesome food, they are able to return to their work, with a small bonus, earned by good conduct, in their hands. On Sundays, they worship in the parish church of Ruthwell; they meet for worship in the evening; neighbours are kind; now and again an entertainment of an innocuous character is provided. "There is no degradation about all that is done, no tendency to pauperisation. On the contrary, the movement has the high aim of helping men who help themselves. It prevents them from becoming the slaves of crime and evil habits, and keeps them employed until they are in a position to fight their own individual battles." [1] As an endeavour to prevent the "out-of-works" from sinking to the level of the loafer, to give aid in a form that inflicts no injury on self-respect, and thus to lift up those who are stumbling and in danger of falling, the association for the development of the labour colony fills a useful place in the record of Christian agencies.

But the record, even in so far as that is now presented, would not be complete without an allusion to a ministry, unique in its conception

[1] Report of the Scottish Labour Colony Association, p. 4. "The whole policy is summed up in the offer of food and shelter in exchange for work."

and in its methods. General Booth, in his sketch of 'Darkest England,' has said of the "utopians, the economists, and most of the philanthropists, that they propound remedies which, if adopted to-morrow, would only affect the aristocracy of the miserable. It is the thrifty, the industrious, the sober, the thoughtful, who can take advantage of these plans. . . . No one will ever make even a visible dint on the morass of squalor who does not deal with the improvident, the lazy, the vicious, and the criminal."[1] These wrecks of humanity cannot be disregarded, in the expectation of some future economical revolution. The Church must care for those who are "down in the quagmire of our social life." And let all honour be given to the Army which holds high the banner of God and humanity in the wild hooliganism of our cities. Much, in its plans and modes of campaign, may seem at variance with the ideals of sober piety; but the circumstances of multitudes are such that some dash, some eccentricity — something loud and, to a finer taste, bordering on the grotesque if not the openly irreverent—may be needful in order to arouse attention and to stimulate the imagination in the way by which alone it can be stimulated. At all events, when we think of

[1] In Darkest England, pp. 35, 36.

the 7560 corps, led by 13,505 officers, besides 40,114 local officers—all fighting a battle for God and righteousness in forty-seven different countries; when we remember the nearly 6000 social institutions, under the care of 2200 officers, in addition to many others who, without any rank, are wholly employed in the work; when we recall the service rendered by the Army in rescuing those who have strayed from the paths of virtue, and in sheltering and endeavouring to lift up the down and the wretched,[1]—we may feel that the blessing of many who were ready to perish is on it, and that He in whose name it serves is saying over it, "Inasmuch as ye have done all this to the least of My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

[1] In the review of the social work of the Army during 1900, it is stated that in the United Kingdom 2,463,802 meals were supplied at cheap food depots, 2460 women and girls were received into rescue homes, 59,718 families in slums were visited, and 45,103 public-houses were visited.

CHAPTER XV.

EFFECTUAL CHURCH MINISTRY.

IMPERFECT as the review of social issues has been, it has shown that, in the circumstances and conditions of modern life, there is an imperative call to Christian Churches to consider their ways. We have seen that many of the most energetic and influential developments of that life are not inspired by Christian motives, that sometimes a positive hostility to organised religious societies is expressed in them. The action of the Church can be traced only on parts of the surface; and the tendency undoubtedly is to withdraw wide areas of interest from any spiritual reference and, apart from this reference, to work out the problem of social salvation. In view of this and also of the ever-increasing importance of the social question, it seems fitting that, before the task undertaken in this volume closes, we should ask, What in

the existing state of Christian institutions — in their action, in their methods, in all that is visible and evidential—is detrimental to their usefulness? What is hindering the success of their mission? What is imperilling the calamity to which Christ alluded when He spoke of the salt losing its savour?

The Church may be held to represent three things—a faith, a society, a social propaganda. Each of these constituents implies the others; but, for the purpose now contemplated, they may be regarded separately though in harmony. In respect of each, the inquiry proposed is, How can the ministry of the Church be made more fully effectual in the varied conditions of the world which it is called to serve?

I.

Christianity is the embodiment of a faith "once for all delivered to the saints." The communion of saints—the Church in its entirety —holds this faith in trust for the good of mankind. If it has not a message that claims to be received on account of its transcendent importance, and of its ability to interpret and fulfil the human life, it has, and can have, no right to be heard amidst the many voices of the age.

If it cannot proclaim its message with a force that the soul must recognise—"in the demonstration of the Spirit"—it will not be heard. "The spread of socialism," it has been affirmed, "is the token of the decline of religion." We may not admit the decline of religion. Men need, and more than ever in the present time are hungering for, a word which they can feel to be a gospel, the revelation to them of the kingdom in which their highest aspirations are satisfied, and in the possession of which they have the righteousness that binds man to man. Of what Matthew Arnold calls religiosity they are impatient, of controversies over creeds they make little account; but they crave something more than political economies; there are wants which an abundance of material happiness cannot satisfy. The spread of socialism may indicate a decline of Church authority, and a growing dissatisfaction with conventional symbols of religion, but it does not show that religion itself is less necessary or is less desired. Nevertheless, if the fellowship that the Church offers and the ministry of this fellowship are thus set aside; if there is a widespread scepticism as to the ability of this fellowship and ministry to express the deepest thought, and to purify the most active life of the day; the situation is one

of gravity for the household of faith. The power of its Gospel is challenged; even the claims of the Christ it declares are questioned. How can this scepticism be disarmed? It is, as yet, rather a tone of mind than a body of articulated opinion: how can a new confidence banish the distrust?

The answer to this inquiry takes us over the entire field of spiritual, intellectual, and practical activity; but the part of the answer which is relevant to the matter specially in view is, that the victory over all sorts of doubt and misgiving will be found in the might with which the faith is proclaimed, and in the signs which follow its proclamation. The confidence of the Christian is that the Spirit of God who dwells with the Church is the witness to the Christ of God, and that, according to His power working in minds, He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that can be asked or thought. But this confidence implies a human condition. The signs "follow them that believe." There must be a subjective faith in the witnessing Church which receives and assimilates the objective faith committed to it. The message is quick and powerful when the appeal is straight to the conscience, when it rightly apprehends the human nature appealed to, when it is directed

by the wisdom and the sympathy which unlock the fastenings of the soul; and if the power of God unto salvation is not manifest in the dispensation of the Gospel of the kingdom, we are bound to inquire where the failure lies? what are the reasons for this limitation of the Spirit of God?

One of such reasons may be an uncertainty in the Church itself. For, the confused groping towards new landing-places which we have observed in social movements has its counterpart in the Church. The more progressive intellects in several Churches are uneasy in the habitudes of thought to which, by their most venerated traditions and by their confessions, they are related, and are searching for ampler spaces into which they can bear the sums and substances of their old beliefs, incorporating them with larger apprehensions of God and of His world. Now, a time in which earnest men are voyaging through troubled waters in quest of new havens, in which ancient orders of belief are giving place to new, but these new not clearly defined, is almost sure to be a time of weakened enthusiasm, of utterance lacking in the concentrated energy which lays effectual siege to the heart. Inevitably, dubieties in thought are reflected in hesitancies of voice. And three results follow. Sympathy

with the most advanced positions partakes more or less of the character of a revolt against Church authority. Or again, to those whose Christian life cannot be dissociated from their Church life and from the things which have been most surely believed, it seems as if the foundations of the house of God on the earth were shaken, as if even the sun, moon, and stars in the firmament of faith were darkened. Or yet once more, to many, unsettlements in the sphere of belief represent ineptitudes at which they mock, or discords which they have neither the time nor the will to regard. They turn away from the Church, and transfer their worship to what is positive and material.

Thus, an arrest is put alike on zeal and on force by intellectual incertitudes in the Church. But, if its teaching wants in strength, it may also want in the wisdom by which the ear of the generation it serves is secured. The Church is not to give the truth intrusted to it away, from the desire to be on good terms with critic or secularist. Nor must it fight with armour that has not been proved. Nevertheless, without yielding aught of that word of the Lord which is "for ever settled in heaven," it must learn, through its understanding of the time, how best to speak to men. It has to read out of two books of

God, each of which sheds light on the other: the book of the life which lies around it, and the book of the laws of the eternal life of which it is the custodian. If it would rightly dispense the fulness of the latter book, and indicate the applications of its principles to the constituents and facts of society, it must diligently study the contents of the former. It must be always a hearer and asker of questions, surveying life in all its phases, in order that it may discern and enforce the bearings of Christian truth on the complex conditions of society. The region of its special influence is one which the political economist does not enter — man's highest universe, without the realisation of which his being is incomplete. There is no charge more frequently pressed against the authorised ministry of the Church than that it does not hit the nail on the very head; does not speak to the world in the manner that commands its attention. This charge is not to be lightly regarded. Churches may well consider whether in their pulpits there is not frequently a failure in relevance; whether the character of the instruction is not such as misses the mark in the case of many with whom the world is present early and late; whether the language in which it is conveyed is not that of books rather than of life, and the

mind is busied over matters that do not bring men into touch with what they feel to be vital, and do not give them really "a lamp to their feet and a light to their path." Having regard to all the social stir and ferment of which they are conscious, Christian people are bound, by the obligations of loyalty to their Lord, to inquire into all that mars the effect of the presentation of the faith, to eliminate the elements which living thought can no longer assimilate from the statement of Christian verity, and thus to bring the statement into fuller harmony with the larger perspectives of the present day.

But of all hindrances to the "free course" of the faith, none is more real, none more constantly quoted, than the separation between the faith as professed and the life as lived of those "who profess and call themselves Christians." Evidences of Christianity cannot always be sifted; but there is an evidence which men can and do sift. They test the worth of a religion by the fruits in conduct which appear. They are sometimes unfair both to those who adhere to the religion and to the religion itself. The best of men are only men at the best: there will be flaws in the marble; there will be inconsistencies at one point or at another. And, instead of condemning the religion because of the faults of those who

acknowledge it to be theirs, the faults may prove only how high the ideal is; how, as measured by its purity and holiness, imperfections and errors are made only the more apparent. But it is on the glaring inconsistency that multitudes lay hold. They sneer at the capitalist, with his long and solemn face on Sunday, and his keen, rasping, grasping way on Monday; praying for the heathen abroad, but ignorant of the condition of those whom he employs. They sneer at the clergy, doing their statutory work, and keeping apart from the sins and miseries of their fellows. They point to stock exchanges and trust companies, and many sorts of business, with their tricks and deceits, their grinding of poor toilers, their gospels of cheapness. They dwell on the gaps between what is believed and what is actually done, and protest that a religion that dwells on another world and does not reform this, that has tides of praise to God and feels not the tides of discontent that are surging around, that passes by the poor and defers to the rich, is not for them; that it is a clog on the wheels of progress, and is a gigantic untruth. In all this, of course, there is extravagance. But, allowing for the extravagance, we may take note of the currents of feeling which are indicated, currents that can only be stemmed by a revived and heightened ethical life in the

Church. The Church is more than an ethical institute: but, though it is more, it must be that; and it must show that its holiness is a robust and an all-pervading power. The question has been put, "Are there any Christians still?" and it has been argued that there is nothing in the practical Christianity of the day that cannot be accounted for without the demand for a faith in supernatural interventions and aids. Now, whilst we all know those in whom the faith in Christ is a spiritual and moral force, who can say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," still it must be owned that the tones and standards of what may be called the average Christianity give some justification for the argument. If the Church would realise its social mission, there must be an uplifting of the conception of the true Christian righteousness, and an insistence on a more strenuous endeavour to fulfil this conception. The power of Christian motive must be brought to bear on business and on politics. The formation of Christian Social Unions, whose object is "to claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice," is a movement in the right direction. Those who enter into such unions are called to prove that the law for which they claim an ultimate authority is sovereign and

supreme over their practice. We need noble "public souls"; men and women who are themselves gospels. To develop, discipline, and educate such souls is the office of the Church. It represents a "co-operation in the endeavour to bring the faith of the Gospel into the council-chamber and the market-place."[1]

No prayer more befits the company of faithful people in the present day than that which the apostles addressed to their Lord, "Increase our faith." The strongest in the grace that is in Christ Jesus will feel most, in the face of all the perplexities and difficulties by which he is beset, the need of additions — of "a more and ever more." Christendom, and not least reformed Christendom, needs a new day of Pentecost, with "the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind filling all the house." From every part of the house, the appeal to the unseen Lord and Head is, "Wilt Thou not quicken us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" The Church may be assured that, where there is apparent failure, the cause is in itself, not in the Gospel of Christ. A veteran in the service of God, to whom the truth of the incarnation was as an anchor of the soul, has stated the confidence that an experience of fifty years had

[1] Westcott, Lessons from Work, p. 264.

compacted — it is a confidence that the Church can take to its heart: "I have learnt more and more certainly that the Gospel of Christ is able to meet the danger, and that it confirms the social application of the faith which I have ventured to call a revelation for our time. It lays open the source of the danger in our forgetfulness of our divine kinsmanship; it justifies our aspirations by showing that the Son of God took our nature upon Him, not to make us brethren, but because we were brethren; it brings to all men one divine aim, and with that a unity of life."[1]

II.

But the Church, whilst called to teach and to preach the faith, is a *society*. Its social character is not the consequence of a concourse of minds holding "the like precious faith"—it is in and of the essential and everlasting nature of things. For, the Church is a fellowship, a brotherhood, an election by God out of mankind, for the good of mankind, united to the elect Son in whom the Father's soul delights. It is an organism in vital relation to Jesus Christ.

The tendency of this day, as we have seen, is

[1] Lessons from Work, p. 262.

collectivist, not individualistic. It is towards large social actions. Society is regarded as an organism, comprehending an indefinite variety of members, none of which are to be exploited, all of which are to receive of the commonwealth, on the one condition that all contribute by personal service to the commonwealth. In this, do we not perceive the ideal which should be manifested in the actual Church? We have traced, towards the beginning of this volume, the working out of the ideal in the first ages of Christianity. We have noted that this Christianity combined many of the elements of Roman imperialism with the higher imperialism of a spiritual kingdom, whose nobility is that of ministry, whose glory is that of sacrifice. It was by the capacity of sacrifice, by the brotherhood signed with the sign of the cross, that the Church conquered the Roman world. It remains to the Church in these latter days to hark back to that glory, to recall that nobility. Its vocation is to represent more fully to mankind the social life which is proper to it — the life whose fundamental principle is, that the good of the whole is to be distributed amongst the members, and that each of the members is to contribute, personally and efficiently, to the good of the whole. The Church ought to be

the mirror of the true spiritual order — not mingling itself with the politics of party, but influencing politics by the force of the example that it sets, of the truth that it manifests, and of the influences that proceed from this example and this truth. It ought to train and to give direction to the spirit of citizenship. It is the witness for a citizenship which links all that is active to the loftiest aspirations of humanity, which connects the hopes of the loyal and true with a kingdom of God; and, nourishing a genuine enthusiasm for whatsoever things are just and pure and lovely and of good report, it is, or should be, the evidence that the love of God is poured out into our world by the Holy Ghost whom He has given us.

But this evidence is obscured by the divisions of the Church. There are unities, indeed, which in some measure moderate the chills caused by external separations, and, in spite of these separations, maintain an inward moral fellowship. In the Scriptures, to which Reformed Churches appeal as the supreme rule of faith and practice, there is "a unity of ethical purpose which never fails through age after age"; and this, amidst all varieties of constitution, is reflected in Christendom. In the Babel-like confusion of voices, we can yet distinguish one historic and con-

tinuous belief. There is a unity of devotion in the worship of Christians, however diversified its forms may be. And, in the administration of gifts by "the self-same Spirit," God is always "lending minds out." When He speaks to any soul, He speaks through it to the world-wide parliament of souls. The vision of the one body is never altogether lost. It can be discerned by all who have the eyes to see. But it is the Church in that which is most visible that attracts or repels the vast majority of men; and the existing condition of the Christian society, broken into sections between which there are wide cleavages, seems to be a denial of the one flock with the one Shepherd, of the one body with the one Head. Surely, not the least urgent of the lessons to be read, marked, and learned from the features of social life on which, in this volume, we have dwelt, is the need—for the truth's sake, for the sake of human wellbeing — of reducing to a minimum the occasions of strife in the Church of God, of concentrating the scattered religious forces, of promoting such a unity in action as shall make more effectual the motive-power of Christianity. How is this to be realised? How is the desire of Christ, that all who believe in Him shall be one, to have more distinct and abundant fruition?

The subject of Church union is beset by difficulties, on which, and on the removal of which, it is not within the scope of this chapter to enlarge. But four points, essential to any real endeavour towards this union, may be indicated.

The first is an honest determination, spreading in the circles of Church membership and becoming a pressure on Church leaders, that there must be, and shall be, a fuller and more explicit concord. Hitherto, unity has been too much a pious sentiment. It has not marked a supreme and distinct purpose. The practical strength has been given to the interests of the denomination: in plans, or projects, or schemes of wider fellowship, men have put the denomination before, instead of behind, them. Now, there is a loyalty to the special Church flag which is entitled to the respect that is due to earnest conviction. But there will be no real advance in the direction of union until the feeling becomes intense, that the circumstances of the time loudly call for the predominance of a higher loyalty still—loyalty to Christ Himself and to the world which the Church serves in His name; and that this loyalty demands a disengagement from the trammels of denominationalism, a readiness, with perfect candour, and with the reverence befitting those who are wait-

ing on God for direction, to inquire how the Christian consciousness shall best be interpreted, and the Christian concert, in the work given to the one body of the Lord, shall most effectively be fulfilled.

Assuming that the desire for a completer unity becomes an operative force in Churches, a further necessity is that persons of different communions shall know each other, not in a mere general way, but through those intimacies of conference and prayer by means of which souls pierce through the outer court of the ecclesiastic into the sanctuary of the Christian and the man. Such knowledge thaws the ice of exclusiveness, rounds the corners of sectarianism, lets men see how like they are to each other, and how much there is in each to be liked by the other, makes those who have hitherto dwelt apart feel at home together. In every Church, there are minds so narrow in their range and so stubborn in their prejudices, that any platform except that which entirely represents them will seem too broad. But, in the large and charitable air of a true, frank communion of spirit and thought, the smallness of the sectary and the bitterness of the fanatic vanish. In the measure in which mutual regard and intelligent perception of the whole

ecclesiastical situation are promoted, the ideal of the Christian society as being truly one body will assume its right proportions. We must be content with slow travelling in the promotion of this knowledge. Prepossessions are obstinate. Feelings which mark the scars that are inherited from the past cannot at once be eradicated. Love suffers long, and it has often a long time in which to suffer. But it never fails. Hasten slowly, it says, in getting all things ready. When they are ready, the railway speed will come.

Probably, a development of the future that will aid unity is one to which Mr A. J. Balfour pointed in a thoughtful speech delivered some time ago. It is that of giving ampler space in Church courts and on Church arenas for open questions. There are many issues, belonging to government, or ritual, or national policy, which might be held as open, not as articles of faith or conditions of unity. Within constitutional and confessional limits, and sometimes outwith these limits when rigidly interpreted, all Churches make room for latitudes of view. Schools of thought, differing almost to the point of opposition, are comprehended. May not this comprehensiveness be extended with a view to a broader fellowship of Churches? May not wider ranges be

allowed for varieties in the apprehension of truth, so long as there is unity in fundamental beliefs and principles? There are topics, moreover, that have formed burning questions on the floor of Assembly and Synod, which, to the great gain of Christian charity, might be removed from their purview, and left to be dealt with as questions for the individual citizen. Some remarks of Dr Robertson Nicoll, in a late number of the 'Liberal Review,' illustrative of this, may fairly be held to represent a prevalent sentiment. "It is probable," he writes, "that the advocacy of Disestablishment will become less and less pronounced in ecclesiastical courts. What is done will be done by men acting in their capacity as citizens. The problems of the great cities have been weighing more and more on the minds of Christian Scotsmen. The state of the vast masses who never attend any place of worship, and live in conditions practically fatal to decency and morality, must be improved." There is the ring at once of a true earnestness and of a sweet reasonableness in these words, and in the spread of this earnestness and this reasonableness lie the hopes of a reconstructed Church in Scotland.

They remind us, also, of a mode of union which does not involve long and anxious negotiation.

It is the way of practical social action. A leading Scottish newspaper, commenting on Dr Robertson Nicoll's article, observed, "Certainly the Churches cannot do better than unite their forces in an assault on social questions."[1] In such a united assault there need be no interference with the autonomy or the legitimate development of each Church. There need not even be formal federation. What is wanted is merely the agreement, allowing testimonies to remain where they are, to make a concerted and strenuous effort towards social salvation, on the basis of the common Christian hope and life. Ministers and members might assemble to study social needs, methods, applications of the law of Christ to the complexities of society, to the phases of the humanity which forms their prospect, and so order their forces that there shall be no waste and overlapping, but disciplined and sympathetic movement. There are many points at which the Church can come into line with the best effort of the day. An example may be given. Towards the close of the 'Sixties in the century which has closed, under the dread of cholera, congregations of all denominations in Glasgow co-operated in the rectification of insanitary conditions, and the cleansing and better fitting of homes. The authorities of the city

[1] The Glasgow Herald.

acknowledged the great service which was thus rendered. Nor did the Churches themselves fail to receive a benefit. What opportunities for similar co-operation are presented! "The Churches," added the newspaper referred to, "might even obtain a fresh lease of power and popularity." Power and popularity are not ends to be sought. But the ends which the Christian brotherhood is bound to seek would be attained by this mutuality of moral and spiritual force. The good of men would be furthered. The beneficent character of Christianity would be vindicated. The essential unity of the Church would be manifested. The Son of man would see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Social union would help to a more visible realisation of the one body—the society which Christ founded.

Ecclesiastical unions cannot be rushed. Those that are called incorporating may represent a loss as well as a gain—a loss in so far as they repress some characteristic expression of the Christian mind, or chill some special warmth of Christian interest. In any case, they are genuine and beneficial only when they mark the growth of an inner spirit of unity which had so permeated the relations of the uniting bodies as to make the external union, not only fitting, but inevitable. Therefore, before union comes unity. And, keep-

ing in view the many and the difficult problems which have been previously referred to, the call to social unity may well assume the form of the address which Milton has put into the lips of Adam when, after the fiat of expulsion from their Paradise, he says to the partner in his sorrow—

> "But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
> Each other, blamed enough elsewhere, but strive
> In offices of love how we may lighten
> Each other's burden in our share of woe."

III.

The union of Churches in practical service would give a new momentum to the social propaganda which the commission of Christ implies. He sent His Church into the world. He bade it go into all the world and make disciples out of all nations; its special instrument, the Gospel of His Kingdom; its special office, to build up human life in the truth of His Kingdom by the diffusion of the Gospel, with all the influences that are proper to it, and in all the ways by which effect can be given to it. The Church, as has been pointed out, is necessarily aggressive and necessarily social. It is itself a social state, and it is called to realise the laws and blessings of its sociality in the civic society which forms its en-

vironment. How, in more adequate manner, to accomplish its vocation, how to regenerate and enrich mankind, is the issue on which a more truly united Church would bestow the force of its most enlightened zeal, and its most competent intellectual and practical force.

It is the issue that is pressing on the Churches of Great Britain. The men of greatest influence in the Church of England are keenly alive to the need of more freedom in its constitution, of more variety in its services, of more flexibility in its agencies, of a more distinct place and work for its laity. A refreshing illustration of the liberality of view that may distinguish a High Churchman is supplied in the earnestness with which the new Bishop of Worcester (Canon Gore) has called the attention of English Churchmen to some of the distinctive features of the constitution and ministry of the Scottish Church. The Free Churches in England also recognise that the social conditions and wants of the day impose on them the obligation to recast many of their agencies. In Scotland, there is a marked advance in the same direction. The reports of the Church of Scotland's Commission on the Religious Condition of the People may be quoted in evidence.

In the first of these reports (1891), the Com-

mission, after saying that "no better system for the planting of practical Christianity in every part of the land could be devised than the parochial or territorial system, if it is sufficiently and efficiently applied," proceeds: "But the increase of the population, and the ever-growing intensity and manifoldness of life, make it imperative to readjust the machinery and to supply additional motive-power, if the work aimed at is to be really done. The one minister for one parish is in many cases inadequate. The ministry must be multiplied. It is not stone and lime that is needed,—here and there, of course, it is needed; it is not further division and subdivision of territory,—here and there that too is needed; but, speaking generally, it seems to the Commission that the most urgent want is more labourers, and more variety in the form of the labour." And four types of ministry are indicated — parish missionaries; lay evangelists, "who might come to the people with more of the vernacular and the plain homespun than the stated pastorate with the assistance of licentiates, living in the midst of the people, and doing the work of a soldier of the cross in square and slum;" women as deaconesses, sisters, nurses; and special mission preachers, helping "to deepen and quicken the life of congregations, and thus

also to strengthen the aggressive work of the Church."

In the reports of successive years, rural and city populations—the miner, the fisherman, the farm-labourer and his bothy, the female worker in fields, as well as the different elements in the town, are included in the view; elasticities of operation are suggested, and the changes are ever rung on the note, "The Church cannot confine its labours to any one phase or side, even the loftiest, of the complex life which it is called to influence. It must comprehend that life in its breadth, and length, and depth, and height."[1]

The statements of the Commission are exhibitive of the trend of all Church life in Scotland.

Three points in this trend may be noticed. The first, an increasing desire to make the house of God more attractive and hospitable; to express more heartily a welcome to all, the poorest equally with the richest; to wipe out the reproach which an earnest Glasgow philanthropist expressed, "Great masses of the population of Glasgow look upon the Church as something for ministers, or something to be made out of them, and not as something to be given them."[2] The second, to develop, not mere agency, but the contact of person with person, in all effort

[1] Report, 1892. [2] Ibid.

for the uplifting and amelioration of social conditions. And the third, to call forth all the best energy and vitality of the Church; to utilise these in their resourcefulness, not for the purpose of administering mere temporary aids, but for the permanent improvement of estate, and the permanent blessing of the life. More and more the words spoken by Norman Macleod, nearly fifty years ago, are accepted as a rule of action: "Let congregations take cognisance of the whole man and his various earthly relationships; let them seek to enrich him with all Christ gave him; let them endeavour to meet all his wants as an active, social, intellectual, sentient, as well as spiritual being, so that men shall know through the ministrations of the body, the Church, how its living Head gives them all things richly to enjoy."[1]

Great and high and holy is the work thus given to the Church. The harvest is plenteous; may the labourers, drawing nearer to each other, and toiling in harmony with all who aim at the betterment of life, be inspired by the love which "abounds in knowledge and in all judgment!" A recent encyclical of the Pope concludes with the sentence, "We have heard enough of the rights of man, let us hear more of the rights

[1] Memoir of Norman Macleod, D.D., vol. ii. p. 8.

of God." But between the rights of man and the rights of God there is no opposition; they are misconceived and misstated on the one side or on the other, when there seems to be conflict. The good of man is the glory of God. The right of man is his portion in God. Amidst all the agitations and the apparent dissonances of the society whose phases, whose problems, whose sorrows, and whose aspirations we have regarded, those who listen for the voice of wisdom, "watching daily at its gates and waiting at the posts of its doors," can hear the inextinguishable cry of the soul for God, the Everlasting Righteousness; and to reveal God to man and reconcile man to God, in righteousness, is the fulfilment of the social mission of the Church.

INDEX.

Abstinence from alcoholic liquor, 176, 177.
Acts of the Apostles quoted, 58, 59.
Alexander, King of Scots, 108.
Alimentations, 72.
Altruism, 296, 297.
Ambrose of Milan, 109 note.
'American (North) Review' referred to, 137.
Anabaptists of Munster, 223.
Anarchism, 263.
Aquinas, Thomas, quoted, 83—referred to, 91.
Aristocracies, old and new, 207, 208.
Aristotle quoted, 6—influence of writings, 84—referred to, 302.
Arnold, Matthew, quoted, 51.
Arnold, Dr T., 203.
Asia Minor, 61, 70.
Assembly, First General, 123.
Athanasius quoted, 35, 36.
Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, referred to, 109 note.
Augustine, head of Roman mission to England, 102, 106.
Aveling, Dr, 211.

Babœuf, Caius Gracchus, 198 and note, 212, 222.
Bakunin, Michael, 263.
Balfour, Right Hon. A. J., referred to, 348.
Barbarians—
  On the frontier of Roman Empire, 70, 71.
  Their respect for Christianity, 78.
  The shaking of their unities, 82.
Bax, Belfort, 269.
Bell, Sir James, referred to and quoted as to Glasgow, 185, 188.
Benedict, St, and his order, 91, 92.
Bentham, Jeremy, 201.
Bernard, St, quoted, 91.
Blanc, Louis, 199.
Booth, Charles, quoted, 147, 149, 165, 171.
Booth, General, quoted, 317, 329.
Bossuet quoted, 92, 93.
Bourgeoisie, the, 212.
Bread Riots, 205.
Bright, Right Hon. John, referred to, 186.
Brissot, M., referred to in 4 note.
Brotherhood, the beginning of the Christian, 57, 58.
Browning, E. B., quoted, 22, 189.
Bruce, the late Professor, referred to, 22—quoted, 30, 38.
Bryce, Right Hon. J. H. ('Holy Roman Empire'), quoted, 79 note.
Building societies in U.S.A., Australia, Great Britain, 190, 191.

Calvin, John, quoted, 116, 117 and note.
Capital, 246-253.
Capitalists, 247.
Carlovingian dynasty, 80.
Carlyle, Thomas, quoted, 286, 287.
Carnegie, Andrew, quoted, 293.
Celtic Church, 105, 106.
Chalmers, Dr, referred to, 128—quoted, 132 and note—his work in relief of poor in Glasgow, 151-154—referred to, 313.
Chamberlain, Right Hon. J., quoted, 147 note—referred to, 158, 161 note.
Charity—
  Sums annually expended by societies, 168.
  Distribution of, indescribable, 168.
  Hurtful influence of much, 168.
  Organisation of, needed, 169.
Charlemagne, 80.
Chartist riots, 205.
Children and street-hawking, 210.
Christianity, causes of progress of, 64-66.
Christian Social Union Settlement Report quoted, 318, 320—aim of Union, 340.
Chrysostom, John, quoted, 77.
Church, Dean, quoted, 15, 60.
Church, The Christian—
  An essential factor in civilisation, 10-12.
  The word, how understood, 12, 13.
  Social vocation, 16.
  In what sense an election, 34-38.
  Condition when Constantine's Edict was published, 70.
  The type of life which it developed, 71-73.
  Its social influence in the fourth century, 74.
  Its efforts among Goths and other tribes, 77.
  Relation to Roman Empire, 78.
  Theories as to Church and State, 81, 82.
  Its aspect and work in the Middle Ages, 82, 83.
  Growth of tares, 96.
  Diversities in unity, 97-99.
  Uniformity in rule insisted on, 99, 100.
  Frictions and schisms in, 101, 102.
  A society mirroring a spiritual order, 342-352.
Civilisation, the three features of Christian, 1—early periods of, 4.
Clergy and progress, 311, 314.
Coleridge, S. T., referred to, 199, 204.
Columba, St, and his monks, 105.
Commercial life, 289, 290.
Commissions—
  (Royal on Licensing Laws), majority and minority reports, 179—minority report, 181-183.
  (General Assembly on Religious Condition of the People), referred to, 314—quoted, 353-355.
  (Glasgow Presbytery and Housing of Poor), referred to, 314.
Competition, 253-255.
Comte, Auguste, 296.
Conscience, a social, Christ's purpose to create it and His method, 31, 32.
Constantine the Great, 75.
Co-operation, 255-257.
  In production, 256.
  In distribution, 256, 257.
  Societies and membership, 256, 257 and note.
Craik, Sir Henry, quoted, 152 note, 313 note.
Cranmer, Archbishop, 116.
Crusades, influence of, 84 note, 88.
Cunningham's 'Church History of Scotland' quoted, 108.

Dante quoted, 92.
D'Aubigné, Merle, quoted, 117, 118.
David, King of Scots, 107.
Davidson, Thomas, quoted, 274.
Decentralisation, a desideratum as to housing, 193.

Discipline, Second Book of, quoted, 118.
Discontent, social, 266-268.
Divisions in Church, 344, 345.
Dominic, St, and his order, 91.
Duns Scotus referred to, 91.

'Ecce Homo' quoted, 49 and note.
Economics, relation to ethics, 9, 10.
'Edinburgh Review' quoted, 202, 301.
Egaux, Society of, 212.
Election, the right meaning of term as applied to the Church, 34-38.
Eliot, George, referred to, 297, 298.
Emerson, R. W., quoted, 207.
Employers' Liability Act, 157.
Encyclopædists, French, 198.
Endowment Scheme, 129-131.
Equality, passion for, 264, 265.
Eremites, 89.
Essenism, 89, 222.
Ethic, of Christ, 23—'of Free Thought' quoted, 261 note, 273—of the day, 301.
Evangelism and philanthropy, 317.
'Expansion of Christian Life,' book referred to, 70 note.

Fabian Society, 211—tracts of society quoted, 227, 236, 253, 254, 270.
Factory and Workshops Acts, 220.
Fairbairn, Principal, quoted, 105, 123 note.
Faith—
The faith of the Church, 332-334.
Subjective, 334.
Uncertainties as to, 335, 336.
Separation between faith and life, 338, 339.
Increase of, 341, 342.
Fellowships of antiquity, 40.
Feudalism, 85—Church influence and attitude, 87-89.
Flint, Professor, quoted, 219, 229, 277.
Foresters' societies referred to, 161.
Fourier, M., 199, 222.
Free Churches in England referred to, 353.
Freeman, Professor, quoted, 110.
Friendly societies referred to, 161.

Geddes, Professor Patrick, 295.
George, Henry, quoted, 238, 241.
'Gesta Christi' quoted, 77, 88.
Giffen, Sir Robert, quoted, 148.
Glasgow—
Services in poorhouses, 162.
Model lodging-houses, 185, 186.
Farmed houses, 186.
One-roomed houses, 186.
Ticketed houses, 186, 187.
Efforts of corporation of, 187.
Gore, Bishop of Worcester, quoted, 83, 301—referred to, 353.
Graham, Rev. H. Grey, quoted, 313.
Graham's, Sir James, Act, 129.
Greek democracy, 198 and note.
Green, J. H., 204, 325, 326.
Greg, W. R., quoted, 222, 223.
Guizot, M., referred to, 11.
Guthrie, Dr Thomas, 313.

Hallam, H., quoted, 80.
'Handy-Book for Guardians of Poor' quoted, 163.
Harmonists, 222.
Headlam, Rev. Stuart, 211.
Hebrew morality, 24, 25.
Hegel quoted, 174, 175.
Hegelianism, 200, 204.
Helps, Sir Arthur, quoted, 53.
Helvetius referred to, 201 note.
Henry III., King of England, 108.
Henry VIII., King of England, 103, 104 note, 113.
'Herald, Glasgow,' quoted, 350, 351.
Hermas quoted, 59.
Herzen, Alex., quoted, 276.
Hilary ('De Trinitate') quoted, 41.
Hildebrand, Gregory VII., 81.
History, its office, 53, 54—ecclesiastical, repels, why? 55, 56.

Hobson, J. H. ('Ruskin as Social Reformer'), quoted, 214, 215.
Hooker, Richard, quoted, 12, 13.
Housing of poor, 184-190.
Hughes, Judge, referred to, 205.
Hutcheson, Professor, referred to, 201 note.
Huxley, Professor, quoted, 141, 142, 166.
Hyndman, H. M., 211.

'Ibsen and Bjornsen' (by George Brand) quoted, 304, 305.
Incarnation, the, 40-50.
  Its witness for the solidarity of mankind, 45.
  The value which it puts on life, 47.
Individual, the, the unit, 1, 2.
Intemperance—
  Percentage of poverty due to it, 171.
  Expenditure on alcoholic liquors, 172.
  Counter-attractions to public-houses, 183.
Iona, 104.
Irenæus quoted, 47.

Jerusalem, 60, 61.
Jesus, the Christ—
  His Jewish environment, 16, 17.
  The originality of His teaching, 20, 21.
  His Sermon on the Mount, 23-27.
  His calling of men, 27, 28.
  His prospect, 29, 30.
  His ethical plan, 31, 32.
  His intercessory prayer, 39.
  His personality unique, 21.
  The Christian apprehension of, 42.
  His sacrifice and its power, 48-50.
  Faith in the living, and what it nourishes, 50, 51.
Johnson, Dr S., quoted, 104.
Johnston, Sheriff, quoted, 112, 113.
Judaism, disengagement of Christianity from, 60.
Justinian, Emperor (Code and Institutes of), 75.

Kaufman, H., 225.
Kentigern or Munghu, 104.
Kingdom of God, the divine order, 32—its two abiding features, 34.
Kingsley, Charles, 205.
Knox, John, his scheme for Church revenue, 124.
Krapotkin, Prince, quoted, 140 note.

Labour—
  Churches, 278.
  Colonies, 327, 328.
  Leagues, 211.
  Question, 229.
  Manual, measure of value, 231-233.
  Whole produce of, claimed as due to labourer, 233, 237.
  Increase of opportunity for labourer, 248, 249.
Lacordaire, Père, referred to, 11.
Lady Margaret Hall, work at, 321.
Laissez faire, 219.
Lang, Andrew, quoted, 122 note.
Lassalle, Ferdinand, 199 and note, 200.
Laveleye, M. de, quoted, 265.
Leckie, W. H., quoted, 208, 209.
Leroux, Pierre, 197 note.
Liquor traffic, 178-180.
Local Government Board reports, 148, 149—reports quoted, 154, 155, 158.
Lodge, Professor, quoted, 253.
Loomis, S. ('Modern Cities'), referred to, 139, 168.
Lowell, J. R., quoted, 285.
'Lux Mundi' quoted, 48.

Mably, M., referred to, 4 note.
Mackenzie, Professor J. S., quoted, 7 note, 25, 303.
McKinley, late President, message quoted, 144.
Macleod, Rev. Dr Norman, referred to, 313—quoted, 154, 356.
M'Neill, Sir John, evidence quoted, 156.

Mallock, W. H., quoted, 8, 297.
Malthus referred to, 139.
Margaret, Queen, 106, 107.
Marriage, early and improvident, 141, 142.
Maurice, Rev. T. D., 205.
Marx, Karl, referred to, 199 and note—quoted, 200, 217, 231 and note, 232, 233, 247.
Melbourne, Lord, referred to, 204.
Mendicant Orders, Franciscan, 85.
Middle Ages, 83-87.
Mill, James, 201, 203.
Mill, J. S., quoted, 7, 43, 219, 245.
Milton, John, 306—quoted, 352.
Moderates, the, and their social service, 313 and note.
Mommsen (historian) referred to, 71 note, 76.
Monachism—
  Spread of, 89, 90.
  Decline and corruption, 92, 93.
Monastery and its influence, 90, 91.
Monks and their service, 91, 92.
Montalembert, Count de, quoted, 91-93.
Moravians referred to, 223.
Morley, John, quoted, note 157, 158.
Mormons referred to, 222.
Mulhall ('Dictionary of Statistics'), 145, 168.

Nationality of Church of England, 102-104.
Nationality of Church of Scotland, 105-108.
Neander quoted, 55.
Nero, Emperor, his accusations, 69.
Newcastle, Bishop of, quoted, 183.
Nicene Creed, 40.
Nicoll, Dr Robertson, quoted, 349.
Ninian, St, 104.

Old age pensions, 158, 159.
Old men, 158.
Owen, Robert, 197 note, 206.
Owenites, 222.

Papacy, growth of, 78-82.
Paraguay, Jesuits in, 222.
Parishes—
  Division and endowment of, 110, 111.
  Quoad sacra, 129.
  Number of, in England at Reformation, 113.
  Number of, in Scotland at Reformation, 114.
Parochial economy, origin and growth of, 109-113.
Parsons, Mr (Chicago), referred to, 264.
Pater, Walter, quoted, 44.
Paton, J., Esq. (Glasgow), referred to and quoted, 185-187.
Paul, Apostle—
  The special theatre of his action, 61.
  His missionary circuits, 62.
  His blending of Greek and Roman thought, 62, 63.
Peel, Viscount, referred to, 181.
Pentecost, day of, 57, 58.
Pepin, Patrician of the Romans, 80.
Persecutions of Christians, why? 66-69.
Peruvians referred to, 222.
Peter, Apostle, chair of, 79—treasury of, 83.
Plato, 222.
'Plea for Liberty' (book) quoted, 159, 160.
Pliny the Younger, his testimony, 66.
Pope, encyclical of, 356.
Population, rapid increase of, and problems, 138-143.
Poverty—
  Appalling prevalence of, 145, 146.
  Pauper element in population, 147-149.
  Pauperism decreasing in England and Scotland, 149.
  Poor Law, 150, 151—amended, 220.
  Administration of funds for poor prior to the Poor Law, 152 note.
  Casual and habitual paupers, 156.
  Estimates of poverty, 165, 166.

Præmunire statute, 103.
Priestley, J., referred to, 201.
Principles—
  Their necessity to the continuance of a society, 39, 40.
  The principles of Christian humanitarianism, 40.
Proletariat, 228, 272.
Propaganda—
  Socialistic, 261.
  Social, of Church, 352-357.
Property in land, 241—theories as to, 241, 242.
Proudhon, M., referred to, 199—quoted, 218, 219, 237, 263.

Quincey, T. De, quoted, 174.

Rae, John ('Contemporary Socialism'), quoted, 217, 264, 266, 276.
Ramsay, Professor W. M., 65, 69 note, 71 note, 73 note, 76.
Rappists (sect), 216.
Rebaud, Louis, 197 note.
Reformation of Church, 113, 115-118.
Regulars (clergy) and their social work, 91, 92.
Renan, E., quoted, 22, 265.
Reunion of Christendom, 119.
Ricardo, S., 230.
Rights of man, 4, 5.
Robertson, Professor James, 129-131.
Robertson, Rev. Dr A., referred to, 313.
Roman Empire—
  Contact of Christianity with, 61.
  Facilities which it gave for the spread of the Gospel, 64, 65.
  Influence of its organisation on Church, 78, 79.
  Democracy of, 198.
  Holy Roman Empire, 80.
Rome, impression made on Goths, 77, 78.
Romulus Augustus, 79.
Rousseau, J. J., 4, 198.
Rowntree and Sherwell ('The Temperance Problem and Social Reform'), referred to and quoted, 172-184.
Ruskin, John, quoted, 56—referred to or quoted, 143, 285, 286, 294, 295.

Sacrifice, power of Christ's, 48-50.
Saint-Simon, M., 199, 309, 310.
Salisbury, Marquis of, quoted, 218.
Salvation Army, its social work, 329, 330.
Schäffle, Dr ('Quintessence of Socialism'), referred to, 225—quoted, 226 and note, 227, 244, 259.
Scotland, condition of, at Reformation, 120, 121.
Scottish Church and Scottish life, 125, 126.
  Testimony concerning, 127.
Selborne, late Earl of, 111.
Selden ('History of Tithes') quoted, 110-112.
Shakers (sect), 216.
Shakespeare quoted, 259.
Shebbeare, C. J., quoted, 198.
Sidgwick, Professor, quoted, 302.
Sigismund, Emperor, proclamation, 89.
Smith, Adam, referred to, 230.
Social Democratic Federation, 211.
Social ethical trends, 284-307.
Social life necessary to completion of the individual, 6, 7.
Social mission of Church, fulfilment of, 357.
Socialism—
  Its protests, 196, 197.
  The genesis and significance of term, 197.
  History of theories of, 198-200.
  Philosophical preparation for it in Great Britain, 200-204.
  Social and industrial circumstances which disposed to it, 205-210.
  Socialistic organisations, 210-212.
  Socialism and democracy, 212, 215.
  Socialism and communism, 215-217.
  Socialism and social effort, 217-219.
  Socialism and extension of State-powers, 219-221.

Variety of form, 222.
Modern, its appeal, 223, 224.
Characteristic positions of, 225-253.
Proposed substitute for competition, 253-259.
Moral and religious aspects of, 260-278.
Hostility to Church and clergy, 274, 275.
Socialist Continental programmes, 215.
Socialist League, 211.
Society—
Civic, one of the three constituents of civilisation, 7.
Civic, interesting for the sake of the unit, 8.
Christian, constitution of, 33.
Sociology, 8-10.
Spence, Thomas, quoted, 241.
Spencer, Herbert, 239, 240.
Stahl, H., 212.
Stanley, Dean, quoted, 62, 63.
Stephen, Leslie, referred to, 203 note.

Taylor, Isaac, quoted, 65, 66.
Temperance reform—
Progress of, 174, 175.
Division in ranks of reformers, 180, 181.
Tennyson, Lord, quoted, 21, 304.
Tillet, Mr Ben, quoted, 159.
Tithes, history of, 109-111.
Tocqueville, De, referred to, 207 —quoted, 214, 215, 264, 265.
Tolstoy, Count Leo, 298, 299.
Doctrine, 300.
Disciples, 300, 301.
Toynbee, Arnold, 295, 318.
Toynbee Hall, 319.
Transport, cheap, for workmen, 193.

Union, Church—
Four points essential to, 346-352.
Unity before union, 351.
Union, trades, 251, 252.
Unionism, New, 212.
United Kingdom, wealth of, 144, 145.
United States of America—
Wealth of, 144.
Democratic constitution, 213.
Fraternities, 216.
University Settlements—
Toynbee, 318-320.
Oxford House, 321, 322.
Cambridge, 322.
Mansfield House, 322, 323.
Features of Settlements, 323-327.

Wages, 233, 235.
Wagner, Professor, quoted, 265.
Watson, William, quoted, 307.
Wealth—
Ethics of, 288.
Waste of, 291.
Responsibility for, 293.
What wealth is, 294, 295.
Of Church at Reformation, 123 124.
Westcott, Bishop of Durham quoted, 14, 224, 283, 341, 342.
William the Conqueror, 102.
Winchester, Bishop of, quoted, 170.
Witchcraft, and cruelties perpetrated on supposed witches, 312.
Wordsworth, William, referred to, 199.
Working Men's Association, 211.

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